

# THE NATION

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## EVENTS OF THE WEEK

THE Liberal Summer School movement has long since established itself as one of the most hopeful activities in Liberalism; and this year's School at Cambridge has been perhaps the most successful and encouraging of the series. The addresses had, indeed, a special interest in view of the Industrial Inquiry with which the Summer School movement is associated. Although, as Mr. Layton was careful to make clear, the individual speakers were stating only their own views, it seems probable that the proposals outlined in some of the addresses will find a place in the Report of the Inquiry. Two addresses were particularly noteworthy in this connection; those of Mr. E. H. Gilpin and Mr. J. M. Keynes. Mr. Gilpin's subject was "The Worker's Place in Industry." He advocated the establishment by statute of a consultative works council in every industrial and commercial establishment employing more than fifty persons, consisting of

representatives of the wage-earners, salaried staff, and management. The first duty of the works council would be to work out a code of rules for the establishment, covering points which would be defined in the statute setting up the works councils.

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Among the matters with which the code of rules would deal the most important would be arrangements regarding dismissals. Mr. Gilpin made a series of suggestions in this connection, the gist of which was that a worker should have the right to state his case and have it properly considered before dismissal took effect, without any infraction of the ultimate right of the management to decide. That, indeed, was the keynote of Mr. Gilpin's "Worker's Charter"—to require the management to consult with representatives of the workers on matters in which the latter are particularly interested, while keeping the management's ultimate authority unimpaired. The plan which he proposed to secure these ends seemed to be carefully thought out, and eminently practicable.

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Mr. Keynes, in his address on "The Public and the Private Concern," drew attention to the vast extent of the industrial field which is already occupied by "semi-socialized" enterprise; Water Boards, building societies, railway companies, co-operative societies, and the like. Measured by the amount of capital employed, "two-thirds of the typical large-scale enterprise of this country had already been removed . . . out of the category of pure private enterprise." The semi-socialized enterprises comprise a great variety of administrative principles and methods; but in all the motive of private profit has ceased to be the main driving force. What we needed to-day was not to spend time in arguing as to whether the area of essentially public enterprise ought to be extended, or as to how far it ought to be extended; but to give our minds to overhauling the existing methods of running this vast range of activities. In many cases, the administrative principles on which extremely important services were conducted were extremely faulty; yet we neglected such questions altogether in our preoccupation with the unreal controversy between the Socialist and the anti-Socialist. As regards the wider sphere of general business, Mr. Keynes put in a strong plea for greater publicity.

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Two admirable addresses were delivered by the party leaders. Sir Herbert Samuel surveyed the relations between Liberalism and Labour in a thoughtful and sympathetic paper. Mr. Lloyd George dealt with the objection raised in some Liberal circles to holding an Industrial Inquiry, which may be the source of fresh differences of opinion within the party. If you merely want to get into office, said Mr. Lloyd George in effect,

it might be best to confine yourself to exploiting the Government's mistakes; though even that is doubtful in view of the competition of the Labour Party. But if you want to carry reforms when you get there, you must prepare the public mind well in advance, otherwise the antagonism which every new idea at first arouses will overwhelm you. Here Mr. Lloyd George used an epigram, which deserves to become classical: "Every man has a little House of Lords in his own head," and developed it, as Kappa describes elsewhere, with consummate artistic skill and oratorical effect.

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We must not attempt to summarize any of the other papers. But we must not omit reference to a startling and most disconcerting fact revealed by Mr. Eagar, in his address on Entry into Industry. As the result of a recent inquiry in London it has been found that large numbers of boys under 16½ years of age are working sixty, seventy, and, in some cases, even eighty hours a week. We call this a startling fact. We recall the history of our factory legislation. We recall the agitation which secured the Ten Hours Bill; the revolt of the public conscience of the hard-faced 'forties against the long hours worked by children; we recall Mrs. Browning's "Cry of the Children." It is something of a shock to realize that in 1927, in a variety of non-factory occupations, boys are working from eight in the morning till ten at night or later. Something certainly needs to be done to secure, as Mr. Eagar proposes, an effective 48-hour week for juveniles.

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A few days ago the break-up of the Geneva Conference at the plenary session on August 4th seemed almost inevitable. As we write there seems just a chance that the situation may be partially saved by the adjournment of the plenary session, pending further discussions between Mr. Kellogg and the British Ambassador on the basis of fixing agreed programmes for the three Powers over the period ending 1931, when the Washington Treaty is due for revision. There seems no chance, however, of the United States accepting the final proposals for a treaty put forward by the British delegates after consultation with the Cabinet. These, like all the British proposals, were very clear and detailed. The basis was a total tonnage in auxiliary craft of 590,000 tons for the British Empire and the United States, and 385,000 tons for Japan, of which 90,000 and 60,000 tons respectively were definitely allotted to submarines, leaving 500,000 and 325,000 tons respectively for cruisers and destroyers together. Within these limits each Power was to build as it pleased, subject to a definite ratio of 12, 12, 8 as the number of 10,000-ton cruisers, and a limit of 6,000 tons and 6-inch guns for all other cruisers. Each Power was to retain certain named cruisers of intermediate type already constructed, and each Power would be permitted to retain for subsidiary purposes cruisers and destroyers up to 25 per cent. of its quota, after they had reached the age for replacement.

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These figures fall within the original American maximum, and approximate closely to the present cruiser and destroyer strength of Great Britain (built, building, and projected); but involve a reduction in the authorized programme of cruisers of the largest type. The provision for retention of obsolescent tonnage would, however, imply an actual increase in the number of ships on the list, which has been greatly reduced since the war. The Americans appear not only to have jibbed at this proposal, but to have shown a tendency to revise in a downwards direction their

original maximum; but the real deadlock seems to have arisen through their refusal to limit the number of the largest cruisers. This refusal, and the insistence of the British delegates on an unalterable numerical minimum as essential to the security of communications have, all along, been the main obstacles to agreement; but the prospects of success have been further hampered by the intensive, bitter, and unscrupulous Press campaign in the United States, by which every British proposal has been represented as an attempt to evade the American claim to parity, and by the failure of the British Government to counter this campaign with a sufficiently public and unmistakable statement of their real position. It seems clear that unless the lessons of Geneva are learned and digested in all countries before 1931, we may be faced in that year by a much more serious breakdown, and we discuss some of those lessons in our leading article this week.

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It would hardly be possible to exaggerate the importance of the decision by the Governor of Massachusetts that Sacco and Vanzetti must die. Pardon is refused, and the execution fixed for August 11th. This result comes at the end of an inquiry, lasting nearly two months, of a special commission, presided over by the President of Harvard, which has reviewed the seven-years' record of the case. Governor Fuller, in dismissing the appeal, says that the two Italians were given a fair trial. The decision will have reverberations throughout the world. Sacco has been on hunger strike for a fortnight, Vanzetti less continuously. Both men are determined not to be sent to the electric chair.

\* \* \*

President Coolidge has startled the American public by making a bald declaration to the effect that he does not choose to be a candidate for re-election in 1928. The message, though dealt with as a first-class sensation in the American Press, is exactly in line with the forecasts made in Washington since the President took up his summer quarters in the Black Hills, South Dakota. Installed as the centre of the most astonishing machine of publicity ever created for a President, Mr. Coolidge has employed his utmost skill during the summer for the overthrow of the traditional prejudice against a third presidential term. Of his own motion he could not come out for renomination: that step would have made inevitable the mobilization of the old-established sentiment against him. "The strategy of the Administration managers is that the President is to be 'drafted,'" wrote the invariably well-informed Washington correspondent of the *NEW REPUBLIC* a month ago; "the strategy of the President is to render the drafting as easy and as sure as possible." Mr. Coolidge's statement is the precise fulfilment of this reading of the situation. It implies, with the simplicity of the practised Republican politician, that the Grand Old Party must determine the choice.

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Even so, however, Mr. Coolidge may discover that he has overshot the mark. He is admittedly very unpopular with the Republican politicians, who have long been resentful of his chilly manner and his personal hostility to the Old Guard, while he has endured four years of opposition from his own party in both Houses of Congress. The Press has constructed a mythical Coolidge bearing no relation to the actual resident in the White House, and it is natural enough that the old-line Republicans should be anything but favourable to the plan of breaking for Mr. Coolidge the rule against a third term, which has been looked upon as a sacred principle since the days of George Washington. The

question of the Republican nomination next year will be decided by the hard facts of the party situation. The chances are heavily in favour of the Democrats running Governor "Al" Smith of New York—an original and powerful personality, with an unequalled popular appeal. What Republican can be depended upon to beat him? The party managers may think that Dawes would almost certainly cause the election of "Al" Smith, and that Hoover or another would not do. In that event Mr. Coolidge would not choose to run: his party would "draft" him.

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The Japanese protest against the new Nanking taxes may have more significance than appears on the surface. It is reported that Mr. Yoshizawa has been instructed to demand that the new taxes shall not be imposed "until the differences between the North and South are settled." A phrase of this kind means either that the Japanese wish to put off tariff negotiations to the Greek Kalends, or that they see at least some prospect of settlement. The whole trend of Japanese policy, and Mr. Yoshizawa's own record, support the more hopeful view. It may even be that Mr. Yoshizawa, who has been one of the shrewdest and most farsighted observers of the Chinese turmoil, at last sees a definite chance of bringing the Northern and Southern leaders together. He himself has always advocated co-operation with the more reasonable sections of the Kuomintang, and he is on good terms with some of the leading men in the South. We suggested last week that the time might possibly have come for the Powers to reopen negotiations, in the hope of contributing to a solution of the internal, as well as the external, problems of China. If Japan is ready to show the way, we trust that British co-operation will be assured.

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Lord Birkenhead spoke with unusual restraint last week at the luncheon "in support of a project to form a non-party League of World Order," but he made it clear that the proposed League would be a league against Russia, unless indeed Russia changes her political philosophy, and we cannot see that any good purpose would be served by an organization on those lines. "None of us," said Lord Birkenhead, "was in the least degree deceived by the pretended distinction between the Third International and the Russian Government," but is there not a danger that this counterblast to the Third International will be identified, by Russians, with the British Government, if prominent Cabinet Ministers participate in its formation? "It was suitable," he added, "that some means should be devised by which men who shared these views in the different countries of the world should be able to make an interchange of opinion, and perhaps a common contribution of effort." It would be interesting to hear Sir Austen Chamberlain's opinion of this project. He has been at some pains to disabuse the minds of European statesmen of the notion that we desired to form a combination against Russia, and we have no doubt of his sincerity, but Lord Birkenhead's Fourth International is not calculated to assist his diplomacy.

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The International Trade Unions Congress, which has been meeting this week in Paris, opened with a strong Communist speech by its president, Mr. Purcell, M.P. This utterance must have been peculiarly distasteful to the moderate British delegates, such as Mr. Citrine and Mr. Hicks, who had in any case a difficult course to steer between the irreconcilable anti-Russian policy of the Continental officials of the Congress and the pro-Soviet tendencies of their own extremist wing.

Mr. Citrine was able, nevertheless, to make an effective attack on the methods employed by the ruling clique at Amsterdam, and the British Secretary, Mr. Brown, produced a private letter from M. Oudegeest, the Dutch Secretary to the International, to M. Jouhaux, the French leader, in which the following passage occurred:—

"I send you herewith copy in French of the letter we have received from Tomsy. It appears to me to show a sincere desire on the part of the Russians to co-operate with us, and, therefore, it seems to me it is time that we passed to the attack."

Thus, instead of discussing Mr. Purcell's views, the Congress has been mainly engaged in mutual recriminations, and a prolonged internal struggle seems inevitable.

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The Chief Factory Inspector, in his Annual Report for the year 1926, reports that the southward trend of industry, to which we have frequently attempted to direct attention, continued last year despite the dislocation of the coal stoppage:—

"The general growth," he writes, "in an industrial sense of the Southern area of the country, and particularly of that part lying east of a line drawn from the Wash to Portsmouth, referred to in last year's Report, is again noticeable."

"These developments," he also states, "are taking place especially along the routes of new roads and extensions of the railways where facilities are available for the transport of both workers and materials."

The italics are ours. Could there be a clearer confirmation of the view we expressed last week as to the pivotal part which an active policy of road construction might play in calling a new Britain into existence to redress the balance of the old? The question of transport is, indeed, one of those questions which we urgently need to review as a whole. At present, railways have, in our view, a legitimate complaint against the conditions under which they have to compete with road transport; and it is highly desirable that the competition should be, not held in check, but put on a fair basis. In this connection we would draw attention to a pamphlet which has just appeared on "Railways versus Roads," by Mr. E. H. Davenport (London General Press, 1s.).

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A recent statement by M. Ponsot, the French High Commissioner in Syria, may be welcomed for its taut and frank recognition of the duties of a Mandatory Power. The policy he outlines is to a large extent an elaboration of the League's last report on the Syrian situation. Its gist is that France, as the Mandatory Power, will endeavour to ascertain and give effect to the reasonable wishes of the Syrian peoples, and will act as arbiter between them in cases of dispute. So far, so good; but when he comes to detailed proposals, M. Ponsot outlines a series of reforms which may arouse the strongest suspicion amongst the native populations. The keynote of the reforms is a greater centralization of the machinery of government. This may, as M. Ponsot claims, conduce to economy and efficiency; but to the native mind, acts of government which emanate from a distant centre are almost invariably regarded as acts of the tribe, race, or faction, who are known to be there in predominant numbers. Centralization of power at the capital will please nobody but the local notables who live near the capital. As the French have just suppressed a revolt which, in many districts, became a civil war between sections of the Syrian population, M. Ponsot would have been well advised to lay less stress on French administrative methods, and more upon the position of France as arbiter.



## FIASCO AT GENEVA?

AS we go to press the delegates at Geneva may be assembling for their last plenary session, and it is only too probable that by the time this article is in our readers' hands, the Conference will have broken up in failure. We shall continue to hope until the last moment that one ray of reason or imagination may break through the fog of the discussions; but it is not too soon to ask the question why a Conference called for the limitation of naval armaments should have brought the world within measurable distance of intensified naval competition.

It is difficult to write with patience of the dreary wrangles of these last few weeks. It is still more difficult to use a decent restraint in speaking of the official attitude towards the probable breakdown of the Conference. To put the consequences of failure at their lowest, the hope of any practical results from the League's Disarmament Conference will be greatly diminished; Anglo-American relations will be embittered by mutual recriminations as to the responsibility for failure; and the propaganda of the Big Navy party in the States will receive a stimulus which will find concrete expression in the new building programme. That programme, in default of agreement, is likely to be reflected in the estimates prepared by the British and Japanese Admiralties. Meanwhile, the American delegates at Geneva are clinging obstinately to a crude and unreasonable formula, and the British delegates to a nice arithmetical calculation, involving a considerable increase in our present cruiser strength. The American Press rings with denunciations of British hypocrisy, and misrepresentations of the British proposals. Mr. Baldwin goes off to Canada; Parliament is promised a full statement in November, and well-meaning gentlemen like Sir Austen Chamberlain and Sir Philip Cunliffe-Lister assure us that they will be very sorry if the Conference fails, but that Great Britain has made every concession compatible with "security."

We are tempted to borrow a phrase misapplied by Blackwood and say that "the phrenzy" of the American Press alarms us less than "the calm, settled, imperturbable, drivelling idiocy" of this helpless and hopeless fatalism. What is important, however, is to discover how the present *impasse* has arisen; for if the cause of armament limitation is to be saved, the nations must learn the lessons of Geneva, whether some patched-up compromise is effected at the last moment or not.

Stripped of all superfluous details, the deadlock has arisen through a straight issue between the claims of the British and American delegates. Japan, a comparatively poor country, obsessed by an hereditary fear of the Western Powers, would almost certainly have come into line with any reasonable compromise between the British and American proposals.

The British delegates proposed that limitation should be based on the actual defensive needs of the Three Powers. This is a sound, logical basis, and was generally accepted, in principle, by the Preparatory Commission for the League Disarmament Conference. The Americans put forward as the essential condition

of agreement an absolute parity of naval strength between the United States and Great Britain. This is not so logical, having regard to the comparative vulnerability of the two countries; but the broad principle had been accepted at Washington, and was not disputed by the British. The trouble came in applying it.

The American delegates proposed to arrive at parity by fixing for the two countries an identical total tonnage in each class under discussion; and as the American need of cruisers is, to put it mildly, less urgent, and their present strength greatly inferior, it was obviously to their interest to put the quota as low as possible, in order to limit the effort which would be necessary if they decided to build up to the agreed limit. The British delegates claimed—and they had the clearest right to do so under the terms of the British acceptance of the President's invitation—that the special needs of the British Empire must be taken into account in assessing the quota, but they raised no objection to the United States building up to that level. So far they had clearly the best of the argument, but they prejudiced their case by naming a figure—seventy cruisers—well in excess of the existing strength, and larger than Parliament was at all likely to vote within the period of the proposed agreement. An element of unreality was thus introduced on both sides of the discussion; but in their latest proposals the British delegates came down to a figure roughly corresponding to existing strength, and just within the proposed American formula, on condition that each Power should be allowed to retain, for subsidiary purposes, old ships equivalent to 25 per cent. of its cruiser and destroyer tonnage, after the period of replacement had arrived.

In addition, the British delegates have put forward a series of carefully thought out proposals for reducing the size and extending the life of all classes of naval units, calculated to check very effectively the growth of naval expenditure, and to emphasize the defensive as opposed to the offensive element in the lighter types. Most of these have been rejected by the Americans on a suspicion that they might conceivably work out to the advantage of the British Fleet, with its superior resources in bases and mercantile auxiliaries. The real crux, however, is the British proposal to limit definitely the number of cruisers of the largest class. The British delegates argue that the needs of trade defence, in a war against any naval opponent, will compel Great Britain to expend a large proportion of her allotted tonnage in numerous cruisers of the smaller types, and that if the United States is free to expend the greater part of her quota in 10,000-ton ships, the American Fleet will have a great superiority of striking force. They add that, unless a limit is placed on the construction of these big cruisers by the Three Powers there will be a general tendency for other Powers to build up to that size. The Americans reply that they are ill-equipped with bases, that the very big cruiser is suited to their needs, and that they decline to say how many they require until the total tonnage is fixed.

This refusal seems to us utterly unreasonable. But should it be allowed to wreck the prospects of agreement? It was part of the strength of the British case that it rested on a basis of definite but general defen-



sive requirements, and not, like the American, on a jealous matching of ship with ship and strategical advantage with strategical advantage between the British and American Fleets. What is the good of saying, as British representatives have said, that war with America is an unthinkable catastrophe, that they are concerned only with the general problems of trade defence and do not care what America builds, if they proclaim that every 10,000-ton cruiser built in the United States must be matched by a British ship of the same class?

What are we going to do if the Conference fails? It is a plain fact that America is rich enough to build as many of the biggest cruisers as she wants, and in the present temper of the American people she is likely enough, failing agreement, to set about building not only up to parity, but beyond it. Are we going to engage in a senseless and hopeless competition with the United States? We have a perfect right to do so. All that Sir Austen Chamberlain and the British delegates have said about the special needs of the Empire is true; but while the British people might consent to be ruined in a good cause, we do not think they should be content to be ruined merely for a good cause.

On almost every point we think the British delegates have had the better of the argument; but we are concerned not with debating points, but with security in the real sense of that much-abused word, and no risk to our security involved either in an illogical formula or in a scaling down of cruiser requirements to something a little below what may be considered technically desirable, is comparable with the risks involved in a definite setback to the cause of armament limitation and a worsening of Anglo-American and Anglo-Japanese relations.

This is the main lesson of Geneva. No real progress in armament limitation is possible so long as each country is thinking more of the terms of the bargain than of the necessity for agreement. If Geneva fails it will be because the Americans cared more for considerations of prestige—the achievement of parity according to their own formula—than for the success of the Conference, and because the British delegates, or the British Government, were too obsessed with the technical merits of their case to realize the consequences of a breakdown.

There are other lessons—the need for a sustained effort to understand both the real requirements, and the political susceptibilities of other countries; and the immense superiority of the League procedure, with its preliminary examination of the basis of discussion, and its clear line of demarcation between the functions of the technical and political delegates. But the Geneva Conference will not have been wholly vain, whatever its practical results, if it teaches us that disarmament can come about only if the Governments and the peoples behind the Governments realize its importance sufficiently to make sacrifices for it and to take risks for it. It may be that as Sir Austen Chamberlain and even Lord Cecil have said, the first step can be only

a modest one; but that first step will never be taken unless we desire it intensely. And the long wrangle at Geneva forces us to ask ourselves whether even that first step can be made until some one of the Great Powers has the imagination and the courage to offer, voluntarily, more than could reasonably be asked of it.

## THE CONDITION OF EUROPE

**M.** BRIAND has more than once called on the statesmen of countries near his own to show themselves good Europeans. It needs a good deal more than that appeal to give unity to the continent on whose outer edge we dwell. Europe consists of some twenty-three States representing many different racial strains, many different traditions, and many different aspirations. It displays a certain cohesion of separate group-divisions, but not the cohesion of a single whole.

Yet Europe, when all is said, is something more than a name. West of the Russian frontier—and Russia must be left out of any ordinary estimate of European tendencies or characteristics—no State except the smallest can become embroiled with a neighbour without three parts of the continent being affected politically or economically. We are still far from anything like even the loosest of European federations, but whether a United States of Europe ever comes or not we live in a Europe of associated States already, for association can be involuntary as well as voluntary.

Of the common political problems of Europe two stand out above the rest. One is the Russian question, the other the slow progress of Franco-German reconciliation. The significance of Russia to the whole continent is illustrated by the fact that the most recent cause of apprehension as to the attitude and intentions of the Soviet Government was that Government's relations, not with one of the European States nearest to the Russian frontier, but with one of the most distant, Great Britain. The agitation of the chancelleries has died down. The confident rumours at first universally accepted by half Europe of Great Britain's aggressive designs have been finally dissipated, and the legend of a new anti-Soviet bloc has served only to stimulate enthusiasm for the melodramatic "Defence Week." The Russian worker and peasant has lately been celebrating. To Poland and Rumania, Soviet Russia must remain an abiding anxiety, but so far as the former is concerned the tranquillity with which the crisis of the Voikoff murder has been smoothed out is proof that relations between the two countries are a good deal less explosive than they were. There is still the Bessarabian question between Rumania and Russia, but trouble is only likely to come there if trouble has come already to Rumania from other quarters.

And whether Rumania is in fact in for trouble internally, it is too soon to say. Developments so far, since Ferdinand's death, have been a good deal more hopeful than they might have been. But behind the façade of a harmonious Parliamentary régime there are several doubtful factors. The Parliament itself is packed. The Regency Council is not impressive. The country's submission to a Bratiano dictatorship, even with men like M. Duca and M. Titulesco to fortify it, is by no means a certainty. Queen Marie, who finds no place in the new order of things, is not given to effacing herself. And Prince Carol, in announcing from Paris that he will go to Rumania if his country calls him, is in effect issuing an invitation, not

awaiting one. But the Bratiano Government has had time by now to get well in the saddle and looks like being able to deal summarily with any internal outbreak before it gets formidable enough to tempt either Hungary or Russia to offer active support.

Austria, too, has got through her crisis for the moment. A good deal about it was fortuitous, and the last thing the Socialists, who were most concerned with the whole business, desired was that events should have taken the turn they did. But the danger is not over. Rescued though she was by the League of Nations from immediately impending disaster, it is only by the adoption of sane economic policies throughout Central Europe that Austria can be saved from the inevitable fate of a country fighting to develop an indispensable export trade in a prison formed of other people's tariff walls. Economic distress makes social and political discontent, and the fact that Vienna is Socialist while the rest of the country is on the whole Conservative militates hopelessly against unity of national purpose. The solution of Austria's particular political problems depends largely on Central Europe's solution of its general economic problems. The recent Economic Conference at Geneva has shown the path of wisdom there, but to see the light is not necessarily to walk in it.

But important as the relations of the lesser European States may be, the stability of Europe as a whole rests on the policy of the greater continental Powers—primarily, of course, France and Germany, with Great Britain an indispensable element in the preservation of equilibrium, and Italy uncertain, incalculable, and making, all things considered, more for unrest than for confidence. The peace treaty settlement being accepted, as it must be, for better or worse, as the basis of post-war Europe, the fortunes of the continent to-day are determined first and foremost by the Locarno treaties. On the whole that adventure in reconciliation has stood the test of time well. It is true the time is short enough yet. The treaties were only signed at the end of 1925. But the proof of their efficacy is not so much any positive rapprochement between France and Germany as the freedom of speech the two countries can now indulge in with equanimity. Poincaré's Lunéville deliverance, narrow-minded and harsh though it was, did as much good as harm in demonstrating the new spirit prevailing in Western Europe. The French Prime Minister relapses into the temper and language of the Ruhr occupation, and Germany, secure in the knowledge that nothing like the Ruhr occupation will ever happen again, is content to reply with dignity instead of anger. That spells an immense advance in eighteen months.

There have, nevertheless, been some disquieting signs of late that the Poincaré policy and the Briand policy are diverging more and more. It is not Briand's fault that the promise of Thoiry has turned to barrenness as it has. If he had his way there would be fewer French troops in the Rhineland to-day. Next year's French elections may mean much to Europe, for it cannot be forgotten that it was the French elections of 1924 that put Herriot in power, damned the old Poincaré policy finally, and opened the door to the settlement of the reparation issue through the Dawes Scheme, and of the security problem through Locarno. What has been done can hardly be undone now, but the character of the next Chamber in France will determine the pace of the reconciliation process. An almost certain crisis in the working of the Dawes system within twelve or eighteen months may prove the decisive test.

But so far at least Locarno has more than justified it-

self, if only by enabling Germany to work with France and Britain at Geneva. That, of course, was the one provision of immediate value in the treaty, for once Germany is in the League she shares practically all the obligations and enjoys practically all the rights embodied in her special agreement with France and Belgium. The League of Nations cannot suffer the direction of any three States, however powerful, but the close co-operation of Britain, France, and Germany is essential if the League is to be the controlling force in Europe. The converse—that with France and Germany pulling different ways at Geneva the League will be stultified—is even truer. Fortunately the three nations are so far pulling together, and, what is not much less important, States like Belgium and Poland and Czechoslovakia with seats on the League Council are pulling with them. So long as that co-operation continues Europe is safe against major conflagrations.

Mr. Baldwin described Locarno at the time as an attempt gradually to extend the area of solid ground into what was till then morass. It is easy to see directions where the process, well begun, must continue. The stupid business of Germany's eastern fortresses is now out of the way, and with certain formal legislation about to be carried through the Reichstag the last shred of foundation for charges of Germany's non-fulfilment of the disarmament clauses of the treaty is removed. But the firm ground badly needs extending further east. German-Polish relations are still strained. There is, of course, no question of war, but economically the results are disastrous for both countries, and psychologically they are little better. They would no doubt be a good deal worse still but for Locarno and the League. Sir Austen Chamberlain is entitled to claim that he was always right when he pointed to the value of Poland's presence side by side with Germany at the League Council table, though the conclusion he drew, that Poland must have a *permanent* seat on the Council, was perverse. Dr. Stresemann and M. Zaleski are both reasonable men, and if solutions could be left to them they would be reached soon enough. Unfortunately Stresemann has his Nationalists to consider, and Zaleski has Pilsudski. The news that the two countries have reached agreement on the long-debated question of the treatment of one another's nationals is of good omen, for till that was disposed of the broader negotiations on commercial relations between Poland and Germany could make no real progress.

To put the matter briefly, it is reasonable to believe that so long as the three major Locarno Powers work together at Geneva the League will have sufficient authority to localize and dispose of any trouble in Europe, provided it does not concern a Great Power. There is only one other European Great Power it can concern—Italy—and a Fascist Italy's intentions are the most disturbing factor in Europe to-day. The trouble with Yugoslavia has blown over because Yugoslavia was not prepared, but recent visitors to that country report that the Yugoslavs will not make that mistake again. All the signs go to show that Signor Mussolini is confident he can repeat his Corfu achievement should occasion arise. Italy would be as helpless as Greece against the League, if the League decided to meet a challenge firmly, for there is not a country in Europe less capable of living alone. On the League's action, if Italy attempted new excursions in the Balkans, the peace of half Europe might hang, and the League's policy would be determined by Great Britain more than by any other State.

H. WILSON HARRIS.



## AT ST. STEPHEN'S EXEUNT

(BY OUR PARLIAMENTARY CORRESPONDENT.)

THE operative part of the session has gone, and the newspapers are filled with accounts of the contemplated recreations of jaded legislators. Looking back I cannot think of any session for the last twenty years so lacking in that interest which comes from the clash of personal forces or elements of distinction in debate; so unfruitful in providing evidence of what may happen in the future; so wasteful of Parliamentary time.

It may, of course, be said, and said honestly, that you cannot obtain exciting or lively debate in Parliament if one party has a majority of two hundred odd over all others and can work in shifts or sections and come up just to vote without attendance. This is especially the case if that party happens to be the Conservative Party. For the Conservative Party, by its nature, is against change except reactionary change, and the Prime Minister, as a condition of his obtaining this great majority nearly three years ago, guaranteed that reactionary change should not be countenanced. He has not been entirely faithful to his promises either in the matter of Free Trade or in the matter of the trade unions, but still he has maintained the position that he will not give protection to any great industry, and he has maintained the position, also, that his followers are not to be affrighted by any of that policy of social reform which he himself thinks is to be found in the novels of Disraeli, and he himself desires to scatter as benefiting the less fortunate classes of the nation. How far we are from the excitement of the days when the Labour Party was in office; when a kind of three-cornered fight used to be continued day after day, and when you could never be certain when you set out in the morning that the Government might not have perished before nightfall! The result of the dreariness of the debates on the Trade Unions Bill, and others that were practically non-controversial, was that we seemed to have been always discussing Estimates or Supplementary Estimates, or questions where comparatively mild attack has been made upon comparatively incompetent Ministers. There has been a dereliction of attendance in the debating chamber which has broken the heart, I should think, of many promising speakers. I doubt whether this apathy has been paralleled since the days of the dying Balfour Government. Hour after hour and day after day, I have listened when the attendance has been less than forty, when at any time a "count" could have been demanded, and when you could almost feel the tongue of the orator sticking to the roof of his mouth as he won no single answering cheer from his supporters, and observed a kind of dead disgust upon the faces of those who were gazing from the other side. If I can find no future leaders who have attained distinction in this session, I expect the answer, that owing to the conditions in which the session has been carried out, attainment by new men of anything like distinction has been almost impossible. The result has been that instead of oratory or even brilliant exposition, we have had many hours when a kind of back-chat has been characteristic of the House—attempts at interruption followed by repartee, which, certainly to the visitor from abroad or the Dominions, seem to add little to the distinction and credit of the Mother of all the Parliaments of the world.

First, as to the Conservatives. Their tameness has been shocking to one who has been in the House of Commons as a member of a great majority. It is under these circumstances that a man of honesty who disagrees with any part of the Government's policy rises, if distinguished, to some kind of eminence; for it is perfectly easy for him to criticize the Government's ideas without in the least degree affecting the passing of the Government's schemes, and it is incredible that every one of over four hundred members should entirely agree with every single line or clause presented in a Government Bill, or with every action performed by any member of the executive.

When the Conservatives obtained an overwhelming majority in 1900, it was pretty soon evident that Mr. Winston Churchill was not going to be a blind supporter of their policy; and very soon a body of brilliant young Conservative revolvers (the "Hughligans") was prominent enough in the House to attract members to leave lobbies and smoking-rooms in order to hear what they had to say. Very similar circumstances were observed in the Parliament of 1906. But now all that the best of the young Conservatives appear able to do is to say ditto to the normally dreary speeches of their leaders, to attempt, sometimes with success, to inflame the Socialists into fury, and occasionally in the meekest possible manner to suggest that a line or clause of a Bill might be better phrased. This deplorable docility cannot be wholly explained by the charm and conspicuous ability of their Chief Whip, Commander Eyre Monsell. The result is that I can name only a few members who may have promise in them—Mr. Duff Cooper, Mr. T. J. O'Connor, Mr. Oliver Stanley, Captain Macmillan, Mr. Mitchell Banks, and the latest notable recruit, Mr. John Buchan. In addition to these, there are three or four other comparatively new members who possess powers equal to those of a President of the Cambridge or Oxford Union. With the best will in the world, and after continual attendance, I am unable to "spot a winner" among this enormous crowd, which seems to have been drafted into Parliament without any clear idea of what it is intended to do, and appears now to be retiring to its holidays without any idea of what should be done. The front bench of the Tories is, of course, deplorable. Mr. Baldwin has sunk steadily in reputation as a leader and speaker, although universally popular as an amiable and generous man. Mr. Churchill is holding the fort with great vivacity, eloquence, and humour, and one trembles to imagine what the Government benches would be like without him. But as for most of the others—the Jixes, the hyphenated knights, the Bridgemans, the Lane-Foxes—one can only say that all of them rolled together would scarcely have been considered adequate to hold an Under-Secretaryship in the Liberal Government of 1906 or in the Coalition Government of 1918.

Labour has suffered a shattering blow outside the House, and its results have been exhibited inside. Mr. Ramsay MacDonald has been away for a considerable part of the session; Mr. Clynes is ineffective as a leader, and Mr. Snowden, although popular and respected in the House, seems somehow alien to the spirit of his own Party. Clydeside has been practically silent, and the intermediate benches between the mountain at the top and the front bench beneath seem mostly to be filled by men wandering about in worlds not realized. A number of miners and trade union secretaries, many of whom can make effective speeches on their own particular subjects, as, for example, Mr. Hartshorn and Mr. Varley on the coal chaos, outside their subject appear to become entirely futile and seemingly bewildered at the conduct of debate. The exceptions I should make are Sir Henry Slesser and Mr. J. H. Thomas, in the fight against the Trade Unions Bill. The technical and legal details were far beyond the scope of intelligence of the majority of Labour members, but Sir Henry Slesser, who knows trade-union law to the tips of his fingers, has certainly enormously increased his reputation. Hitting harder than he has ever done before, he smashed the unhappy Sir Douglas Hogg into fragments time after time, and compelled him to promise alteration or reduced him to sullen silence. In fact one of the features of the session has been the way in which the reputation of that other jolly and popular lawyer has declined, owing to his handling of a complicated and grotesque measure, from the position which he once seemed to hold as a potential leader of his Party. Again and again he has got them into difficulties—a fact which will be brought up against those voting with him in their own constituencies. It is evident that his future is legal rather than political, that such talents as he displays are more suited to the law courts than to a law-making assembly. Mr. Thomas, being on the most extreme Right of the Labour Party, fighting Socialism, and still more fiercely Communism, in the country, has never



intervened in the long-drawn-out debate without providing some fresh interest and some criticism to which even the Conservatives were compelled to listen. He has given warnings in the Trade Unions Bill debates which have had their effect at by-elections and have given cause for meditation among the Conservative members, especially for industrial districts.

The Liberal Party, of course, has been in a difficulty. It has never been able to recover from the 1924 election. It has suffered from the desertion either to Tory or to Labour of men who have despaired of its future, and from elements of personal incompatibility which need not be unduly emphasized. From the midst of a tiny section of the House, which often fissures into three parts, one voting in one lobby, one in another, and one not voting at all, Mr. Lloyd George has been able to keep his personal ascendancy in Parliament, and in such speeches as that on the second reading of the Trade Unions Bill or on the reform of the House of Lords has shown the old Parliamentary ability which makes his critics look foolish and absurd. Of the newer men who have gone straight to the front, one is Mr. Harney, who certainly provided criticism on the Trade Unions Bill more efficient than that provided by Labour, and time after time, with knowledge and with a fine Parliamentary manner, tied up the Attorney-General into hopeless confusion, and not only won approval from the Opposition, but, what is a more active achievement, caused uneasiness among the supporters of the Government. Another is Sir Archibald Sinclair, who has spoken mainly on matters not so controversial, but who has developed a style and capacity for criticism, with the judicious use of a stammer, which not only supplements his universal popularity among all parties, but makes visitors in the galleries inquire with interest the name and position of the orator. Mr. Ian Macpherson has spoken too little, although he has been in constant attendance. Sir John Simon had the misfortune to be out of sympathy with his party on the only substantial Bill of the session. Mr. Runciman has been for the most part away at Geneva or elsewhere. Mr. Garro Jones, in constant attendance, has certainly increased his reputation. Praise should also be given to Mr. Percy Harris, Captain Evans, Sir Robert Hamilton, one or two victors in the by-elections, and to those who by constant attendance and willingness to plunge in if need be upon any question—for with a tiny party of this nature everyone must be prepared if necessary to speak about everything—have worked hard for the Party. Above all, Sir Robert Hutchison has shown himself, as Chief Whip, always smiling, imperturbable, unrattled by criticism outside or within, and destined, I think, to rank, when the Party comes back with power, with the notable Chief Whips of the past, whose achievements are talked of with bated breath.

The Finance Bill roused no interest until the super-tax men revolted, and after revolting repented, and after repentance entertained Mr. Winston Churchill with great good humour. The House of Lords question rose like a sudden cyclone, entirely unexpected, and produced first-class Parliamentary debates both in the Commons and in the Lords. In the latter, Lord Beauchamp's leadership was conspicuously efficient and commendable, and the Liberal Peers have received a notable addition to their debating strength in the person of Lord Reading.

The Committees "upstairs" have been the scenes of insult and scramble, in which motions of censure have been put down by members against chairmen, and the joyful figure of "Josh" Wedgwood engaged in the glorious work of obstructing everything, has risen triumphantly among the lesser lights.

Still, except for the smashing results of the by-elections, it is impossible to find guidance for forecasting the future. The Government majority has not crumbled; the Government's ideas and ideals are dead, if they ever existed; Liberals and Labour apparently propose to put up candidates against each other in all the constituencies, and one cannot assert with any confidence that the Tory Party has as yet sunk so low as to make it impossible for it, in a majority of the constituencies, to obtain the votes of more than one third of the electors.

And so, for the moment, the curtain falls!

## LIFE AND POLITICS

NO journalist worth his salt, presented with a "prepared" speech by Mr. Lloyd George, would dream of printing it in his paper in the written form. He would listen to what it occurred to the orator actually to say when on his legs and stimulated by his audience, knowing well that the written speech would in the event bear the same relation to the spoken one as the *caput mortuum* does to the flame. With the pen in his hand Mr. Lloyd George is deserted by all his magic. He is the consummate improviser on the platform; the phrase suggests the idea and the idea the phrase in rapid interplay. At the Liberal Summer School a few days ago he came down with one of those judiciously written speeches in which excellent but rather lifeless ideas were imprisoned. When he spoke he gave them life, and set them free in a flock of ingenious and amusing images, as he alone can. With him emphatically the chance suggestions that invade the mind in a state of excitement are the brightest and best; by taking thought he loses his oratorical soul. One could watch the process of inspiration—for that is what it is in its kind—going on as he spoke. It occurred to him, for instance, to make the whimsical statement: "Every man has a House of Lords in his own head." Immediately his fancy took flight, and he developed the conceit just as a poet or a musician spontaneously makes an idea real to himself by dramatizing it in one shape after another. So we had a passage such as could have come from no other speaker, in which the contents of the House of Lords in one's head (those conservative instincts that resist the impact of new thoughts) were particularized and humanized. It is this, the picture-making faculty, that distinguishes Mr. Lloyd George from all other speakers of the first class; others have it in some degree, but in no one else is it so essential to the expression of his mind. For this reason the characteristic Lloyd George utterance is a journey full of little shocks and surprises, at the end of which one is slightly out of breath, but not at all tired.

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Most Liberals of one's acquaintance deplore the publicity which has befallen the private co-operation of Lord Oxford's friends to relieve him from anxiety about money. Unfortunately, Lord Riddell's Sunday organ of uplift got hold of it, and the other papers followed suit. The arrangement is entirely honourable, both to the givers and to the receiver. It is permissible to doubt whether it would be possible anywhere but in this country for a gift to a great party leader to be shared in by men bitterly opposed to him in politics. Lord Oxford has never thought of money, and here was a chance for friends who possess plenty of it to show the general appreciation of his great gifts and work, in the way that is possible to them alone. At the same time one regrets the necessity of private help. The Prime Ministers of this country ought to be put beyond the possibility of financial stress by the State which they serve. Why should a Lord Chancellor automatically receive on retirement a pension of five thousand a year for life, even though he only sits on the Woolsack for a few months, and a Prime Minister receive nothing, after a lifetime of disinterested service for the nation? A generous pension, given without conditions, should be available for ex-Prime Ministers as a matter of course.

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I spent a pleasant day last week in the company of the American editors, chiefly from the South and Middle West, who have been exploring England. I was struck by their unaffected friendliness and simplicity. The bragging American of legend is rarely met with nowadays; at any rate, I have never come across him in a fairly extensive

acquaintance with post-war visitors. What they do show is a sincere desire to understand our habits of mind and life, and this in a spirit of instinctive sympathy which springs from the sense of kinship. Superficial irritations go for nothing—they are on the surface, squabbles within the family—put in the scale with this swift understanding, which is rooted in race and a common way of approaching the problems of conduct. The security and prosperity of their country does not fill them with complacency; at any rate the host cannot discern a sense of superiority lurking behind the politeness of guests. One finds, on the contrary, a certain anxiety and disquiet; a feeling that the supremacy of the Anglo-Saxon ideals is seriously endangered by modern cosmopolitanism and the corruptions of excessive wealth. Of course, generalizations in this matter are dangerous, for when one mixes with a party of men drawn from twenty-five States one realizes the extraordinary diversity of America, and it is hopeless to expect the man from Nevada and the man from Connecticut (say) to think or to speak alike, especially if Prohibition is the theme. At the same time, if both men are of the pure Anglo-Saxon strain, there is no mistaking the curious ancestral harmony, as one may call it, which comes out naturally when they breathe the English air. The 100 per cent. American is a 100 per cent. Britisher (in a broad sense), whether he likes it and admits it, or whether he does neither.

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I wish success to the appeal that is to be made shortly for the endowment of Cobden's old Sussex home as a memorial of the life work of that great man. Cobden's last surviving daughter, Mrs. Fisher Unwin, and her husband have lived in Dunfold House until recently, and they have had the happy thought of presenting it, with its beautiful grounds, as a permanent centre for the propaganda of peace and goodwill among nations. The conception of Free Trade as the parent of peace throughout the world, which was essential in the teaching of Cobden and Bright, seems a distant ideal in these days of bitter economic warfare. There is all the more need to keep it alive, for the remorseless tariff competition of the European countries is at this moment the chief obstacle to revival from the ruin of the war and to any hope of preventing the economic disintegration of the old world. Up to the present international politics, only too obviously, have not developed as the great Free Traders of the mid-nineteenth century hoped, and even in England the future of Free Trade is becoming very doubtful. It is a good thing that we should have in this modest country house, stored now with relics of the old struggle for commercial co-operation, a centre for the rekindling of the fine spirit of the old Manchester idealism. America, through the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, is helping the scheme, on the understanding that it is well supported on this side. Here is a chance for Lancashire to remember the ideals of its heroic age, if indeed the pressure of circumstances would allow them to be forgotten. At Geneva recently the business leaders of Europe all talked Cobdenism without knowing it.

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Age and illness kept Sir Harry Johnston away from the London scene in his later years. His reputation as explorer and expert in African languages and customs always stood very high among his fellow experts, but the public of this generation knew little about him. In his prime Sir Harry Johnston was a man of extraordinary strength and energy. He was short, sturdy, and, like so

many men who have shown uncommon resolution in action, mild-mannered and gentle. In his great years he had got first as the pioneer of British development into large and rich areas in East Africa—a story which he told brilliantly in one of his novels. His best title to remembrance is the historic agreement with the chiefs of Uganda. Principles governing the tenure of native lands were laid down which were just to the original owners and to the conquering white, and if they had been followed everywhere would have saved us from the infliction of untold misery and loss upon native tribes. Johnston was regarded for a generation by Africans as the Englishman who best understood their laws, customs, and habits of mind. He was remarkably versatile. He was an art student in his youth, and could paint well; and quite late in life, after his career as explorer and administrator was over, finding himself in need of money (he had refused many opportunities of making money out of Africa), he turned novelist at the suggestion of Mr. H. G. Wells. He invented a new form—the continuation into the next generation of the lives of characters in famous fiction. "The Gay Dombey," a sequel to "Dombey and Son," justified the audacity of the attempt by its freshness and brilliance, but later on he rather overworked the method. His fiction was largely autobiography, and it was none the worse for that. His novels are rather casual and badly told, but full of direct observation and the sound stuff of experience.

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Writing here about greyhound racing with the mechanical hare before it was added to London's sports, I prophesied that it would cause a big increase in betting by the poor. This prophecy has been amply fulfilled. I went to the White City from curiosity the other day, and found the place swarming with bookmakers who were doing very brisk business. Their clients included many women and children. It is worth noting as a sign of social change that the establishment of this highly efficient betting machinery was allowed to take place without any important protest. At any time up to the war there would have been certainly a vigorous campaign against greyhound racing on this ground carried on by the Nonconformist churches and the anti-gambling societies. What is the reason of this acquiescence? A wide extension of facilities for betting among people to whom shillings are important is an unquestionable evil. The machinery of horse-race betting has been quickly and easily adapted to the new sport. One's impression of the racing was that it is a rather sordid business, with very little genuine sporting interest in it. It compares badly with the great horse-racing meetings, which, after all, take place in fresh country surroundings, and bring together all the social classes in a superficial harmony. Greyhound racing started in the industrial North, and flourishes now in a London suburb, and it is proving chiefly attractive to working people. As for the purely sporting side, the dogs might as well be run by electricity, like the hare, for any satisfaction it gives me, at any rate, to see them at it. As an admirer of dogs I am disappointed that the greyhounds do not see through the game. They continue to offer their admirers this humiliating spectacle of stupidity, and to act like fools to make a bookmaker's business day. Or is it conceivable that they do penetrate the fraud, and either from subservience or necessity play down to the purposes of their human exploiters?

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The last moment to talk about a man or his crimes is when he is released from his punishment.

KAPPA.



## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### BRITAIN AND AMERICA AND WAR

SIR,—Will you permit me to put an outrageous question to you? In one of your Notes you say, "It is a cardinal principle of British policy that war with America would be a calamity so unthinkable that it should not be taken into account as a possible contingency." I do not know whether it is a cardinal principle of American policy that war with England would be a calamity so unthinkable that it should not be taken into account as a possible contingency, but supposing it is not? What then? It is part of the post-prandial political oratory of both countries that, although England and America may fight other countries, it is unthinkable that they should ever fight each other. But why is this unthinkable? They fought each other when the American people were predominantly British in origin—the Americans even fought a long and bitter war among themselves—and I am unable to understand why, when the American people are no longer predominantly British in origin, war between the two countries should be more unthinkable than it was over a century ago. Some people believe that America nearly entered the European contest on the side of the Germans. I repeat that belief, not because I accept it, but because I think that a rather stronger body of German and Irish people in the United States might have sent America on to the side of the Central Powers. It seems to me that as the non-British-in-origin population of America increases in numbers, the unthinkability of war between that country and this one becomes less.

I share your view that a war between England and America would be a calamity, but then I believe that all war is a calamity. I need not add that I am not writing this letter in any spirit of ill-will towards America, where I have many friends, but simply in order to draw from you an explanation of a phrase that seems to me to be loose and sentimental and, therefore, dangerous.—Yours, &c.,

ST. JOHN ERVINE.

Ben Wyvis Hotel, Strathpeffer Spa, N.B.

August 1st, 1927.

[Our phrase may have seemed sentimental, but our point is cynical realism. We could not contemplate fighting the United States, not merely because all war is a calamity, but because such a war would be fatal to us. Whatever the precise balance of naval strength, whether we had a smaller or a much larger cruiser tonnage than the United States, we could not maintain our trade with the American Continent; and imports from the American Continent are essential to us. While we should suffer the most grievous injury from the first days of such a war, an injury which we should be incapable of sustaining indefinitely, we should be unable to inflict any commensurate damage upon the economic life of the United States. This being so—and who can deny it?—we say it is foolish to base our naval preparations on the contingency of a war with the United States. Moreover, we believe that this view is officially accepted. When we wrote that "it is a cardinal principle of British policy" to leave the contingency of war with America out of account, we meant what we said, i.e., not merely that we should like to leave it out of account, but that our war departments in fact do so. And we say that this makes it the more inept to risk the breakdown of the Conference, with all its grave potentialities, for the sake of securing what seems to us an equitable construction of the formula of parity, when, questions of prestige apart, exact parity with America is essentially objectless.—ED., NATION.]

### THE INDUSTRIAL TRANSITION

SIR,—In a long series of very illuminating articles, the last one, so far, appearing in your issue of July 23rd, you have been showing that British industrial life is undergoing a rapid change from old export industries belonging to the North, to new ones, working for the home market in the first instance and located further south. From this you deduce a great deal of your industrial difficulties, including an unemployment figure never appreciably below a million. You emphasize the fact that temporary factors, like Continental disturbances, depreciated foreign currencies, coal

strikes, and so on, are of quite subordinate importance, and you attribute the stress usually laid upon them to "that most stubborn of all human instincts, the reluctance to face unpleasant facts." But at the same time you are eager to point out that there has been no decrease in the national income of the country and that, therefore, the situation is far from desperate, the problem being one of adjustment to new conditions, "of organizing a difficult transition."

Now, I am far from offering any objection to the argument I have now tried to summarize, mostly in your own words. On the contrary I think you are giving by that a great help to practical economic thought, not only inside but also out of Britain. But at the same time there is no denying that you have hardly alluded to some problems, which to my mind are not only part and parcel of your situation, but which may possibly be vital parts of it.

Let me put it this way:—

If the national income per head is unchanged, and if there is not a decrease in the demand for labour as compared with capital, industry would be able to keep unemployment down at its pre-war figure if two premises were extant. One of them is that industrial wages, real wages, of course, are at their pre-war level. The other is that there is enough of mobility of capital and labour to transfer them from stagnant to expanding trades. If, on the other hand, either one, or the other, or both, of those two premises are lacking, then unemployment must follow.

Taking now the rate of wages first, there appears to be a widespread opinion among British economists that it has comparatively little to do with the present state of unemployment. And, holding that opinion, they appear also to think that your Unemployment Insurance scheme does not increase unemployment to any appreciable extent. This is not easy to understand. It was, therefore, rather interesting to find Professor Henry Clay, in an article in the *ECONOMIC JOURNAL* under the somewhat forbidding title, "The Authoritarian Element in Distribution," pointing out as one of the great merits of the Unemployment Insurance scheme that it kept wages up, by turning over to the community the upkeep of those who became unemployed as a consequence of the increased wage-level. According to this reasoning, unemployment is fulfilling a social service in the present state of society; and Unemployment Insurance is benefiting society by keeping unemployment up. There is certainly no objection to make to this from a theoretical point of view, though the usefulness of such a policy may be open to serious doubt. But my present object is to show that, if Professor Clay is right, the wage-level and its cause, or causes, are among the most potent factors of the present situation. Why not discuss it?

My second question refers to mobility of labour. Surely, if an important transition is taking place from one set of industries, located in one part of the country, to another set in another part, everything ought to be done in order to facilitate mobility between these two parts of the body economic, to prevent them from becoming water-tight compartments. Is everything really being done in that direction? And, more precisely, does not the Unemployment Insurance scheme work in the opposite direction? In the last discussion of the scheme which I have come across, an authoritative study by Sir William Beveridge in the volume on "War and Insurance" (in the Carnegie Endowment series), it is convincingly shown how baseless most complaints have been with regard to unlawful practices inside the scheme. But, I submit, from an economic as well as from a social point of view the important question is, how insurance against unemployment has been influencing the labour market, and, perhaps in the first instance, the mobility of labour. The difficulty of finding that out is certainly very great, and that may be the reason for the almost complete lack—as far as I have been able to see—of discussions of that sort. But is it altogether out of the question that one reason for it might be "that most stubborn of all human instincts, the reluctance to face unpleasant facts?"

I am quite sure, however, that your willingness to discuss precisely those aspects of present-day problems which are most usually shirked, precludes the influence of that reason in your case, as well as in that of all serious economists. But you would certainly do a great favour to



at least one of your constant readers by subjecting that aspect of your present troubles to a thorough investigation. Yours, &c.,

ELI F. HECKSCHER.

Stockholm.

July 27th, 1927.

[We agree with Professor Heckscher that the factors which he mentions are important. But we cannot admit that we have neglected them. We have put right in the forefront of our analysis the maladjustment between the wage-level and the higher sterling exchange brought about by deflation and the return to the gold standard. We discussed the question of mobility of labour, the part played by unemployment insurance in making for immobility, and the need for measures to secure greater mobility, at some length in an article in our issue of December 4th last.—ED., NATION.]

### BRITAIN AS A RENTIER

SIR,—After all the talk about the burden of the national debt, the necessity for economy, &c., it is refreshing to be told by Mr. Brand that our troubles are due in part not to our poverty but to our excessive wealth (in foreign investments).

As Mr. Brand claims, the beneficial interest in our income in foreign investments is diffused throughout the community by the process of taxation. Our wage-earners, therefore, in addition to the wages which they earn by their own efforts receive something in the nature of "unearned income" as, e.g., a contribution to education, or national health benefits, &c., the cost of which falls on the foreigner. But why should this, as Mr. Brand suggests, handicap our export industries? From one point of view, those engaged in these industries are helped rather than hindered by the fact that they enjoy a better standard of living which, to that extent, is not an additional burden on the industry. But says Mr. Brand, this "unearned income" increases railway and other charges "thus adding to the cost of production." I find it difficult to follow this argument. By his own hypothesis the "unearned income" received by the railwayman, the municipal employee, &c., is ultimately paid out of the £300,000,000 income from abroad. I am not suggesting that the wages paid in the sheltered industries do not in fact impose a burden on the export industries, but I do not see how this is related to the distribution of our income from abroad.

A comparison of our present conditions with those prevailing before the war does not support Mr. Brand's argument. In 1913 both our foreign income and our exports were substantially higher than at present.

One final point. What exactly does Mr. Brand mean by "foreign investments"? His economic argument applies to the whole of our "invisible exports," i.e., profits from shipping, banking, insurance, &c., as well as income from what is more strictly speaking "foreign investments." But Mr. Brand has also a moral argument. He says, "as a result of the efforts and sacrifices of past generations, we exact tribute from the rest of the world to the extent of some £300,000,000 or more per annum." Clearly, profits from shipping, banking, &c., are not "tribute." And there are many other sources of income from abroad to which Mr. Brand's description does not apply. Take, for example, the revenue from the rubber industry, developed by British enterprise and managed under British control. Can it even apply to the income received from such enterprises as the railways in Argentina? Here we have provided a foreign country with an efficient system of inland transport, officered and controlled by our own people. Is the income we receive from this source "tribute" arising from the efforts of past generations? Is it not rather payment for services rendered?

—Yours, &c.,

C. R. V. COURTIS.

25, Moorgate, E.C.2.

August 2nd, 1927.

### "MOTHER INDIA"

SIR,—I have read with deep interest all the reviews of Miss Mayo's "Mother India," and I must confess I am surprised.

C. S., in the NEW STATESMAN, says: "It is the most important and truthful book that has been written about

India. Her analysis of Indian social conditions is equally startling and convincing." Mr. Thompson in your columns has added, "If Miss Mayo had published the first 134 pages of her book the effect would have been overwhelming."

I do not for a moment question the importance or the originality of the book. But on point of conviction I would like to put a simple question. If a person collects two dozen cases of rape committed on very young girls under cruel circumstances in England in one year, will he have established an irresistible case against English morals? Your reviewer thinks that "Miss Mayo has a right to judge a system by the worst of the cruelties that it permits." He may be right. But judged by that standard, no system, I am afraid, that human ingenuity has so far devised can justify its existence.

Nothing would be easier than advocating the abolition of the marriage institution altogether. I am not for a second defending child-marriage (which, by the way, is not the system in India), I am only suggesting that the way that Miss Mayo has chosen to attack it is not only wrong but thoroughly stupid. She has quoted a dozen cases that were collected in 1891. The fact that she had to go to a hospital which has a monopoly of such cases in the N.E. of India and could get nothing more up-to-date than forty years ago shows, if it shows anything at all, that such cases are few and far between. But I submit that if she had succeeded in collecting not fifty but 500 cases in a single year she would not have carried the conviction of sane people an inch further. Simple enumeration is the weakest possible argument, and selective enumeration for that is an incredible insult to the common sense of man.

But Miss Mayo does not stop there. Once she has established her premises she is prolific in her conclusions. In the words of Mr. Thompson, "Hinduism is beneath contempt in its worship of the male and its sex obsession generally. That is why Indian literature is even at its best often a thing that arouses scorn as well as admiration."

It is a pity that a man who is conversant with the names of Ramayana and Mahabharata, and who gives the impression of having read Manik-kavashar and Tagore can be found to endorse such a view. Nobody can object to an honest difference of opinion. There are thousands of English men who honestly believe Oscar Wilde to be immoral and Bernard Shaw positively wicked. But to maintain that a man who does not believe in the perfect equality of the sexes *ipso facto* ceases to possess any literary value and falls to the level of the contemptible is, to say the least, ridiculous.

Space would not allow me to enter into the vexed and difficult problem of the relation of the sexes. It is one of those nice questions that cannot be decided on a *priori* hypothesis because human happiness, which is the only crucial test, does not easily lend itself to accurate measurement. Views on the question will always differ. And to suggest that the Indians are bound to be unhappy because they do not encourage mixed colleges or permit their women to divorce their husbands may sound a good advertisement but is hardly sound reasoning. There is perhaps less of sex equality in India than the West. But surely the way to prove or attack it is not by talking glibly of Hinduism without understanding what Hinduism means.

That is my chief objection to the book. It is extremely weak and seems to make no case at all. I understand the author went to every village in India to collect her material. I am positive the book could have been written without ever coming within a hundred miles of the country. Gandhi's views, Tagore's essays, Indian princes' opinions, stories told by pundits to Americans are matters of universal knowledge. Perhaps it is unkind, yet Miss Mayo could have been more useful if she had spared her feet some trouble and used her head more, and if she had kept to one single subject instead of amateurish dabbling in the domain of history and art and philosophy, which in spite of residence in the new world one cannot understand without a lifelong study.—Yours, &c.,

S. S. D.

## THESE JESTING PILATES

By WINIFRED HOLTBY.

"WHAT is it," asks Plato in the *Euthyphro*, "that men quarrel over most passionately when they dispute? Is it not over the questions of justice and injustice, of beauty, goodness, and the like?" He might have added "of truth," for no question is more capable of arousing a fine, hot, vigorous quarrel than the famous question of Jestling Pilate. We have been at it again. During the past month the columns of the *Times* have been enlivened by as pretty and spirited a controversy as one might wish to overhear, between Mr. F. S. Marvin, Dr. G. P. Gooch, and the officials of the League of Nations Union on the one hand, and, on the other, Professor J. L. Morison, Dr. Rouse, of the Perse School, Cambridge, and Sir Cyril Cobb.

The trouble began on July 6th, when Professor Morison, who is a subscribing member of the League of Nations Union and a Scotsman, received from that body a pamphlet entitled, "The Schools of Britain and the Peace of the World." This work embodies a memorandum from the National Union of Teachers and nine other educational associations, addressed to the Board of Education, commenting upon a report from the sub-committee of experts appointed by the League of Nations, to advise "upon the instruction of children and young people in the existence and aims of the League." It contains suggestions for carrying the recommendations of this report into practice, and it offers in an Appendix, certain "Notes on the International Aspects of History," by F. S. Marvin, M.A.

This document aroused the wrath of Professor Morison. To his mind it suggested "the immediate prospect of a new compulsory propaganda to be launched on the country through the schools." "All forms of propaganda," says he, "are to be discouraged, and by propaganda I mean any form of intellectual solicitation which attempts to give plain facts more than their due weight or value." An admirable definition. He protested "against the misuse of our educational system in pursuit of something else than truth sought in the spirit of truth," and he commented upon the "old vice in idealists of a weaker sort to pervert the past in order to gain new sanctions for the visions of the future."

To this letter Mr. Marvin, Dr. Gooch, and Dr. Maxwell Garnett replied with proper spirit, declaring, first, that there was no intention of "hustling the nation" by means of "compulsory propaganda," into any new conception of history; the memorandum came from the teachers themselves and was written in language of considerable independence. Secondly, far from perverting the past, Mr. Marvin's notes and the memorandum sought to redress an unfairness of balance hitherto overweighted upon the nationalistic side of history teaching. Their reply provoked the Professor, after a rousing condemnation of "fatuous sentimentalism," into a statement of his creed as an educator through history:—

"I believe that truth is great, and that it will prevail.

"I believe that truth is full of ugly, painful, and even abominable things, but that I must face these.

"There is a sacred duty towards all young and immature minds, and even to secure their welfare I must not pervert, exaggerate or 'economize' the truth.

"And I am profoundly hopeful."

Now this is a fine, stiff, bracing creed. The Professor followed in the true tradition of St. Jerome when he declared, "If an offence cometh from the truth, better were it that the offence should come than that the truth should not be spoken." But also his *Credo* marches admir-

ably with a statement made by the teachers in their offending memorandum, a statement possibly overlooked by the Professor. "To think and act as if things were not what they are generally leads to trouble."

The teachers, it would seem, are a trifle more cautious and pragmatical than the Professor. But then they are confronted, not by the niceties of an academic discussion about Truth, but by the actuality of several rows of desks, in which are seated anything from twenty to sixty creatures, whose ultimate destiny, as teachers are constantly reminded, it is to control the fortunes of the British Empire. Now the teachers know perfectly well that whether or not Herbart was right, and "the one aim of education is morality," it is certainly true that upon a knowledge of the world, as originally presented in the classrooms, any reasoned judgment of political matters must be based. "And," they continue, "the young people of to-day may lose civilization itself if they grow up to think of the modern world as if it were the world of their grandfathers, of international anarchy between Sovereign States, and of the history books that ended in 1914." In other words, if it is true, as Alfred Fabre Luce declared, that "*L'histoire suit la politique*," it is also true that "*La politique suit l'histoire*," for "*le présent porte toujours le passé qu'il lui faut*."

With this responsibility upon them, the teachers have to convey to the children some impression of the human past. Since about 75 per cent. of their pupils leave their charge at the age of fourteen, and can neither read with ease nor calculate with confidence before the ages of eight or nine, and since the history teaching in these five or six intervening years, or in the four or five which follow for the more fortunate minority, has to be dovetailed into a curriculum including mathematics and scripture-knowledge, language and arts and physical exercises, sewing and singing, personal hygiene, and what not, it becomes clear that the time and energy available for the study of this particular subject is somewhat limited. It will not, in any circumstances, be possible to teach everything about the past, about the Manorial System and the Ming Dynasty and Assignats and Adam Smith and the Battle of Crecy and the Italian policy during the Crimean War. The teacher must make his choice. According to our English educational system, the choice allowed him is fairly wide; he may select according to his personal predilections; but select he must.

It is during this business of selection that history-teaching may develop into propaganda. We have seen a nation indulging in what Mr. H. G. Wells termed a falsification of the human past for the sake of the Hohenzollern future; we have seen a Mayor of Chicago soliciting Irish, German and Negro votes by promising to kick George III. out of the history books; we might conceivably see a generation representing the League of Nations as an institute of archangels, restoring order to a naughty world.

But, as a matter of fact, is any history-teaching quite free from propaganda? Why is it to-day almost impossible for a Roman Catholic to obtain a history-teaching post, even in our reputedly undenominational secondary schools? How many school text-books tell the truth, shall we say, about the Battle of Copenhagen? Do we remember the later dragging years of the Hundred Years' War as well as we remember Agincourt? Exactly what impression, if any, do most English school children receive of early British policy in China? Are the celebrations of Empire Day, the singing of patriotic songs, the rendering of Church history, and the usual lessons in "civics," entirely without propagandist emphasis?

Is it indeed possible, is it even desirable, that school



teaching should be cleansed of propaganda? Directly a child leaves school, still for the most part at a tender age, he will be exposed not to one but to a hundred different germs of the poison, through the Press, the films, through speeches, songs and broadcast programmes, through private conversation and public argument. Is it safer to keep the school-child in a sterilized world of antiseptic "truth," or to inoculate him, not by one, but by many kinds of propaganda?

After all, one disagreeable truth from which Professor Morison would not surely have us shrink is that most men have some intellectual axe to grind. Children might as well learn this sooner as later. Teachers who have not strong opinions are likely to have little else. What we really want are not teachers without prejudices, but teachers honest enough to confess their bias and state openly, "This is my opinion. It is not everybody's. It may not be yours. Only never accept anything as true just because I say it is. The truth is important, and I am trying to find it; but you must look for it yourself." Intellectual scepticism is the basis of a sound education, and few methods of teaching develop this more surely than strong opinions, honestly admitted, and counteracted by conflicting opinions, honestly exposed. All other methods lead to intellectual anæmia and sterile innocence.

## THE MAGDEBURG THEATRE EXHIBITION

THE Magdeburg Theatre Exhibition, while it is devoted entirely to the German drama and playhouse, has a far wider interest than might appear at first sight, for it includes representative displays of all those theatrical movements which have had an influence on Germany. There is to be found here, not only objects connected with purely national activities, but others associated with developments as far apart as the classical Athenian drama and the latest Tairov experiments in Moscow. The *commedia dell'arte*, the English comedians, the art of the Bibienas and of other foreign designers—all these are given ample space in this Exhibition.

By far the most important section is that devoted to the history and art of the theatre. In the commercial halls one may see the most modern of lighting equipments with demonstrations of the Schwabe-Hasait system; one may see the latest in wig and costume displays; one may even wander around that monstrous dragon, now lying in his gore, which played such a part in the "Nibelungen" film, and which is a perfect masterpiece of ingenuity; but it is to the *Historische* and *Künstlerische Abteilung* that return is always made. Here we start with the Greek theatre and note, amid the interesting exhibits from Munich, a superb model of a classical playhouse. Built by Heinrich Wirsing after the design by Professor Heinrich Bulle, this model reconstructs a performance of the "Agamemnon" of Æschylus. So realistic are the figures that one might imagine oneself looking on a "Tanagra Theatre" show, suddenly stilled to inaction. Some conception of the delicacy and detail of this model may be made when it is realized that, in a breadth of two metres, some three thousand spectators, each separately shown in three dimensions, are set on the rings of stone benches. The tale is once more taken up in the Middle Ages, and here we find the original plans for the Lucerne Easter play of 1583, accompanied by a model of the performance, the manuscripts of the Alsfelder Passion play, of the Eisenach "Ten Virgins," of the Donaueschingen Passion play, a number of separate models, a collection of engravings and carved woodwork, and a whole series of exhibits illustrating the Oberammergau Passion play during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The religious drama is intimately associated with the folk play, and accordingly the next section carries us to the Fool-drama and the *commedia*

*dell'arte*. A specially interesting model of the "Navrentreppe" at Trausnitz Castle deserves mention, for here is the earliest German illustration of Italian types. Amid the well-known Callot engravings and a beautiful collection of eighteenth-century Meissen and Nymphenburg porcelain figures, two watercolours by an unknown artist attract attention, partly because of their æsthetic beauty, partly because of their historical value, depicting as they do a number of Italian comedians on a bare platform stage in a village square. From the *commedia dell'arte* to the *commedia erudita* is but a step, and we pass from the platform of Arlecchino to the "classic" stages of learned academies. The delightful engravings in the Lyons "Terence" of 1486 are here shown, not only in the original, but also in enlarged photographs and in an excellent model lent by Dr. Carl Neissen of Köln. Then comes Serlio, changing the primitive little curtained compartments into perspective vistas, and once more models assist in the mental visualization of the settings. The ground becomes richer here, and a perfect harvest, in which the names of Palladio, Callot, and Furttenbach shine clearly, delights the eye in drawing, engraving, and reconstruction. The baroque follows with Parigi, Torelli, Burnacini, and the Bibiena family, and then a chronologically backward movement to the Elizabethan stage. A beautifully executed model of the Fortune theatre and two authentic costumes of seventeenth-century English comedians at once attract attention here, and from these we move on through the fortunes of the German drama, inspired by memories of the *englischen Komödianten*, until at the end of the central hall our eyes are greeted with a view of the original scenery for Schiller's "Die Räuber," as given in the Mannheim *Nationaltheater* on January 13th, 1782. The yellow walls of the "Moorish palace" (strangely baroque in style!) are still fresh and clear, and the painted sunlight still slants down by the fictional windows in the side wings to the left.

No better realization could be gained of the enormous chasm which separates the Continental theatre of yesterday from the Continental theatre of to-day than a simple walk of a few yards from Schiller's "Räuber" to the latest models for the "Walküre," and to the representative collections of modern German theatrical activity. In place of the perspective so dearly beloved by earlier artists there is an endeavour to secure symbolic effects; in place of simple sidewings and back-cloths come built-up settings; in place of the more primitive theatrical machinery there is the vast array of sliding, turning, rising, lowering stages with every mechanical and electric device at the service of the director. The beauty as well as the revolutionary tendencies in the modern German theatre are here fully displayed. We start with Appia, grey and violet, and the followers of Gordon Craig, with vast majestic conceptions, and then, among the artists at work in the Düsseldorf, Dresden, Berlin, Karlsruhe, Magdeburg, and Kiel theatres, we find represented almost every artistic movement from pure symbolism of colour and line, to "expressionism" and "constructivism," and, looking at these, we realize how much more experimental is the German theatre as compared with the English. This historical and cultural gallery seems to leave us in London far back, if not actually with Schiller's "Die Räuber," at least with that section which closes chronologically with the year 1900.

ALLARDYCE NICOLL.

## PLAYS AND PICTURES

PLAYROOM SIX is the tiniest of theatres. It is up a flight of stairs at 6, New Compton Street, Cambridge Circus. It is so small that there is no perceptible division between the audience and the stage. Indeed, some entrances to the stage are made through the stalls. Any actor will tell you that it is a great handicap to be too near his audience. The actors of Playroom Six appeared to be under no embarrassment through this proximity. Their play was "Art and Opportunity," by Harold Chapin, and it seemed to me to be extremely well acted. Miss Agnes Thomas has a wonderful power of conveying the



dignity of old age. Miss Dorothy Varick is not Miss Marie Tempest, but it is a little unfair to blame her for that. In her own way and in her own spirit she gave a very good interpretation of Chapin's amusing heroine. Lists of actors' names, with parenthetical applause, are apt to become boring, especially in such a case as this when the whole effort was so praiseworthy.

A word about the author. That curious visitation of death which through war and other means seemed to have damped the brightest hopes of our theatre, took away Chapin. Haughton died, Hankin, James Elroy Flecker. Chapin was killed while serving as a stretcher-bearer. It is not easy even now to estimate his place as a dramatist, but I do not think that it is too much to say that he had an almost unequalled facility of dialogue. I can think of no dramatist since Vanbrugh who had quite Chapin's mastery. His plays were mostly trivial, but they were all marked by the humour of a gentle mind. In "The New Morality" he succeeded in portraying the initial stages of drunkenness in a way that was never for a moment offensive. That scene will stand for me always as touching the high-water mark of the dramatist's art. Any playgoer knows that drunkenness portrayed on the stage is apt to be very tedious. When it is remembered also that the whole plot of "The New Morality" turns on one lady calling another a "dog show name," and that it is one of the most delicate comedies in our language, it must argue that Chapin had not only great skill but a gracious spirit.

It is very difficult to write a good play about a dull fellow. Almost invariably it turns out to be a dull play. "Cautious Campbell," by Brenda Girvin and Monica Cosens, produced last week at the Royalty (having been "tried out" at the Q), has a mean, slow-witted idiot as its hero. I could get very little entertainment out of him or the family with whom he lived. Jokes about the supposed meanness of Scotsmen, the love affairs of half-wits, and jibes against middle-aged spinsterhood are not amusing. I was sorry to see that fine actor Leslie Banks condemned to play this tedious stuff. Miss Elsa Lanchester seemed to me to give what vitality there was to the play. I offer my apologies to the rest of the actors, all of whom I should like to see in something more worthy of their attention.

Marie Corelli's "The Sorrows of Satan" affords perfect material for a film by Mr. D. W. Griffith: it has just the right mixture of melodrama, moral uplift, voluptuousness, and sob-stuff, with opportunities for displays of what American film-directors call "sexiness," mixed with occasional allusions to the Almighty. Its success is well deserved; it has been nicely calculated to appeal to the great heart of the public. And technically the film is excellent. The photography is first-rate, and Mr. Griffith manages to make the utmost of every situation and every gesture. True, his conceptions of the gaieties of High Society in London, based, we imagine, on similar diversions in Hollywood or New York, are somewhat high-flown, and might well have been less vulgar and more amusing. By far the best thing in the film is the acting of M. Adolphe Menjou, who plays the part of Satan with all his accustomed charm and polish and withstands even Mr. Griffith's efforts to make him a merely sentimental figure: his slight air of disillusionment is very refreshing. Mr. Ricardo Cortez also acts well as Geoffrey Tempest, and Miss Lya de Putti is extremely effective as the devil's accomplice. But what a pity that one can never go to see a film at the Plaza Theatre without suffering twenty minutes or so of acute boredom while pieces such as Rachmaninov's "Prelude" are played by the "Classical Jazz Orchestra," alternating with insipid "tableaux vivants" and indifferent dancing.

A selection of the work sent in for the Competition of Industrial Designs organized by the Royal Society of Arts for prizes and scholarships offered by the Society and by certain well-known manufacturers is now on exhibition in the Indian Pavilion of the Imperial Institute, South Kensington. The exhibition includes designs in Architectural Decoration (wrought iron gates for a City Company, an entrance hall for a block of flats, &c.), designs for Textiles, Furniture, Printing and Book-Production, Book-Binding, China, Earthenware and Glass, as well as for Posters, Show-cards, Lay-outs, Cartons, and Price Lists. The Society has also established a bureau of information in connection with the exhibition, with the object of putting designers in touch with manufacturers. The principle of the exhibition, therefore, if it seeks to get new blood into English commercial art, cannot be too highly praised, but there is evidence here of the vicious circle in which commercial art finds itself in this country. The fault is mainly on the side of the manufacturers, who are too timid and conventional to accept any but the most conservative designs. The artists, on the other hand, are much too ready to give in to them, and the inevitable result is that almost all, even of the most interesting and original work to be seen here, is half-hearted and diffident. The lack of enterprise on the part of the manufacturers is easily gauged by a study of the prize-winning designs.

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## THE WORLD OF BOOKS

## THE BIG DRUMMERS

I CAN remember being taken, as a very small boy, to see Barnum's Circus. It was then, of course, the largest circus in the world, the grandest circus, the last word in circuses. One was immensely impressed; but one was also a little disgusted. There was none of the romance about it that hung over the tents of Lord George Sanger; and the Siamese Twins writhing on a red plush chair were simply repulsive and haunted one's dreams for months to come. There is the same combination of qualities in "Struggles and Triumphs, or The Life of P. T. Barnum Written by Himself," edited by George S. Bryan (Knopf, 2 vols., 2 guineas). Lord George Sanger's short book of reminiscences is one of the most charming and romantic of autobiographies. These two colossal volumes of Barnum's are extraordinarily interesting, but there is no charm, no romance either about them or about him. Barnum was the first great apostle of the big drum, one of those men of intuition who feel instantly the little breezes which in the next generation will blow hurricanes. He was the prophet of twentieth-century civilization, with its Northcliffes and Hearsts, its Fords and Great Wars. He beat the big drum with a frantic energy and success that have been the gift and reward of few drummers, but his personality is hard, and, in some respects, as squirming and repulsive as his Siamese Twins. His surface was soft and gigantic, but it concealed a nucleus of iron, or rather ferro-concrete. If Mr. Pecksniff had been an American showman, he would have been almost indistinguishable from Phineas Taylor Barnum.

The autobiography now published is an amalgamation of the various autobiographies published by Barnum during his lifetime. Those who embark upon it should not miss another book just published, "Trumpets of Jubilee," by Constance Mayfield Rourke (Cape, 18s.). Barnum and Miss Rourke between them supply 1,300 large pages of reading matter, which will last a good many people through their summer holidays. Miss Rourke has had a very good idea, and has carried it out with considerable ability. She has written the lives of Lyman Beecher, his daughter Harriet Beecher Stowe, his son, Henry Ward Beecher, Horace Greeley, the founder and editor of the *TRIBUNE*, and Barnum. The title of her book might well have been "The Big Drummers," for the connection between her five biographees is that they all had a genius for big drum beating, an instinct for shouting "Walk up, walk up, ladies and gentlemen," in just that tone of voice which would make the great public flock into their church, lecture-room, museum, or circus, or rush to buy their "Uncle Tom's Cabin." Miss Rourke's book is not exactly easy reading, and her style is somewhat fatiguing; but I found it extraordinarily entertaining, full of information which was new to me, and packed with details which show the incredible vagaries of the human soul.

Lyman Beecher was a clergyman; so was his son, Henry Ward Beecher; his daughter Harriet was a popular novelist; Greeley was a journalist and editor; Barnum was a showman and financier. But they were all essentially big drummers. You can tell it by their language and their voices. They all spoke the same language, and they all always shouted at the top of their voices, "Walk up,

walk up, ladies and gentlemen." When Barnum wished to announce that his circus possessed a hippopotamus, he called it "the Sweating Behemoth of the Scriptures." When Lyman Beecher wanted to say what he thought of Robert Owen's colony at New Harmony, he said: "The entire system is constructed for the accommodation of the most disgusting licentiousness, and produces the most fearful paroxysm of infuriated depravity." "You are crystalline, your faces are radiant!" Henry Ward Beecher shouted from the pulpit at his congregation in Plymouth Church. When Greeley wanted to describe tobacco, he said that it was "if not the most pernicious, certainly the vilest, most detestable abuse of his corrupt sensual appetites of which depraved man is capable." And when Mrs. Stowe was asked how she wrote "Uncle Tom's Cabin," she replied with portentous solemnity, "God wrote it."

\* \* \*

The noise and shouting and the thunder of language are not alone sufficient to make a successful big drummer. The three Beechers, Greeley, and Barnum were all possessed of a dæmonic energy. Their energy is terrifying. They preached incessantly, lectured incessantly, wrote endless books, married three wives, begat a dozen children (Lyman Beecher had so many wives and so many children that he could not remember which wife was the mother of which child), rushed about the world exhibiting Tom Thumb, or lecturing on the Civil War, had endless law suits, made fortunes, lost fortunes, made more fortunes, founded and edited great newspapers, flung themselves into politics, built enormous houses, built cities. What they did does not appear to have been of great importance to them, provided that it was done at a great speed, on a gigantic scale, and with an enormous amount of noise. Someone called Henry Ward Beecher the Barnum of religion, and Barnum might well have been called the apostle of the circus. Their energy was torrential, but it flowed, like some natural phenomenon, indiscriminately in and out of religion, the circus, feminism, wars, politics, journalism, slavery, or Byron's relations to his wife. To those who are not big drummers they are objects of wonder, but objects upon whom one cannot keep one's eyes very long. When the author of "Uncle Tom's Cabin" went to see Abraham Lincoln, the President said to her: "So you're the little woman who made this great war"; and then, turning abruptly away towards the hearth: "I do love an open fire; we always had one to home." And so one likes to turn one's eyes away from the Beechers, the Greeleys, and the Barnums to the not otherwise attractive figure of Mrs. Stowe's husband, Calvin E. Stowe. Professor Stowe, in the rich and gigantic house which his wife built out of the proceeds of "Uncle Tom's Cabin," once tried to mend a broken pane of glass with a sheet of tin, and after breaking all the other panes in the window retired to his own room in an agony of despair. It was typical of Calvin E. Stowe. From his childhood, he was accustomed to see phantoms and visions, and he once woke up to see in his bed "an ashy-blue skeleton which seemed to him entirely palpable." And once, when his wife left town on one of her eternal journeyings, and, having missed her train, returned to the room in which Professor Stowe was reading, he paid no attention to her for some time, and then remarked absently: "O, I thought you were one of my visions." Perhaps, after all, she was.

LEONARD WOOLF.

## REVIEWS

## MIDSUMMER CHORUS

- Poems, 1914-1926.** By ROBERT GRAVES. (Heinemann. 7s. 6d.)  
**The Cyder Feast, and Other Poems.** By SACHEVERELL SITWELL. (Duckworth. 7s. 6d.)  
**The City.** By RUTH MANNING SANDERS. (Benn. 6s.)  
**The Son of Learning.** By AUSTIN CLARKE. (Allen & Unwin. 5s.)  
**Twilight Songs.** By KATHARINE TYNAN. (Blackwell. 5s.)  
**Difficult Love.** By L. A. G. STRONG. (Blackwell. 5s.)  
**Stuff and Nonsense and So On.** By WALTER DE LA MARE. Woodcuts by BOLD. (Constable. 7s. 6d.)

THOSE wealthy people who are interested enough in modern verse to buy it find that their shelves become highly decorated with slim sections of numerous poets. A considerable effort of assemblage is often needed to discover where So-and-So is writing himself to, and the answer is often found to be: "Nowhere." This question has been pertinent to every small book which Mr. Robert Graves has thrown off, and in assembling himself he has now given a definite and impressive answer. In at least two senses he proves himself to be that comparatively rare bird, a professional poet. The first thing which must strike any reader of his collected poems is his mastery of the craft of verse-making; the second, which makes true sense of the chronological order of this book, is that he knows both how to travel and where he is going. In one of his jolly early rhymes he says roundly: "I now delight in spite of the might and the right of classical tradition, in writing and reciting straight ahead, without let or omission, just any little rhyme or any little tune that runs in my head." Time has proved him to be modest. True, he has scant use for other people's rules: for instance, there is not a sonnet in this book. But he is always inventing hard new rules for himself, and keeping them with an absolute strictness. From first to last his verse is masculine, muscular, cleanly articulated, free from twists and inversions, stripped of soft ornament, and hard with thought. Many of his most original poems betray the reader into inattention through sheer technical perfection. It is sometimes only on a second reading that one salutes his triumph in expressing a subtle idea in straightforward English through a series of stanzas of complicated metrical and rhyming form. There may be some regret that in his general development the sunny sturdiness of his earlier verse has given place to what he describes, in one of his essays, as police-court reports of rows in his unconscious self. Perhaps the war started those brawls. At any rate queer things happened to Mr. Graves while he was writing some of the few *real* war-poems in trench-boots and British-warm; and queer things have continued to happen since. His beautiful but uncharacteristic "Rocky Acres" begins:—

"This is a wild land, country of my choice,  
 With harsh craggy mountain, moor ample and bare.  
 Seldom in these acres is heard any voice  
 But voice of cold water that runs here and there  
 Through rocks and lank heather growing without care.  
 No mice in the heath run nor no birds cry,  
 For fear of the dark speck that floats in the sky."

That is the poetical country which Mr. Graves has reached. The world of stay-at-homes will hope for more strange news from him.

The other day, Miss Edith Sitwell was lecturing on "Sitwellism" at Oxford; and if there were a diploma examination in literary criticism, "Sitwellism" might well constitute a special subject for distinction. Readers in search of a definition are referred to Mr. Sacheverell Sitwell's "The Cyder Feast," and are advised to sharpen all their wits before opening it. Mr. Sitwell is the despair of reviewers pressed for time and space: these gentlemen may frequently be seen retiring from the unequal contest waving banners inscribed with complimentary but unhelpful epithets such as "distinguished," and "individual." His latest book contains a group of poems about flowers and fruits; in these he does not so much contemplate a pear-tree as advance upon it and submerge it in that strange atmosphere, intense and brilliantly illuminated, which he carries about with him. The slow ripening of pears moves him to ask:—

"Are they lovers at this last hour still asleep,  
 Who drifted into slumber at foamed windows in the blossom

While they lay through spring hours upon that cream or  
 snow of honey,  
 And the bees to their matrix came, and every wind that blew  
 Crumbled the tree of snow and rattled at foamed windows?"

When such beauty blossoms upon the page, it is very much worth while to lie patiently in wait for the sense which drifts in and out of the exuberant images, and to acclimatize oneself to unearthly weather in which light, sound, smell, touch, and movement are dizzily interchangeable.

The city of Mrs. Sanders's long poem is the New Jerusalem. Jesus rides into the capitalist world on an ass. He falls into the hands of a jerry-builder, who runs him up a sort of White City instead of a golden one. He falls foul of the builders' union, municipal regulations, the law of trespass, and the artistic standards of night-clubs. But because poor Moll, wife of Hodge, has eyes to see the city before its foundations, Jesus rouses the buried giants and out-at-elbow saints of the moorland and bids them build. So one morning Moll, accounted mad by the village, puts on her best hat, scrubs her clutch of children, and trails off to the walls shining on the hill. There is room and to spare for failure to build up this simple tale. But Mrs. Sanders, firmly rooted in her knowledge of the distressful humours of the labouring poor, and working well within her powers in quiet and homely pentameters, has made a poem of beautiful tenderness, pity, and understanding. She fails indeed (where few have succeeded) when she leaves earth and sings the glories of the City. But the large simplicity of this work places her in the company of Miss Sackville-West as one who can sustain a true poetic impulse through more than two thousand lines.

Mr. Austin Clarke has taken a Gaelic tale and turned it into a comedy with as much vigour as Mr. James Stephens might have turned it into a fairy story. Producers in search of something fresh and sharply conceived might note that, although this is written in blank verse and even contains a great deal of poetry, it is full of dramatic movement, of racy speech (not speeches), and of excellent earthy humours. A king is possessed by a demon of gluttony, and while he is undergoing a cure by prayer and fasting in a monastery, a quick-witted son of learning enters, captures the Abbot's mighty dinner, trusses the King up to table, consumes the feast, and makes love to the king's lady under the king's helpless eye. This baiting is too much for the demon, who leaps out of the king's mouth with a thunderclap, and so the cure is effected. The dialogue goes with great gusto:—

"SCHOLAR (slowly):

O savour of all savours!  
 Brown roasted beef, basted upon the spit  
 With lavish honey and the large white salt  
 From drying-pans, choice mutton that was suckled  
 Upon green tits of grass, a crock of gravy  
 In which the fattened geese could swim again,  
 And poultry in the egg, parsley and sauce,  
 Green cabbage boiling with a juicy ham  
 Crumbled with meal; whole puddings, speckled puddings,  
 Fat puddings with their little puddings, sweet litter  
 O' the pig, loud celery.

"KING (excitedly): I crunch! I crunch!"

The next two books on this list are collections of miscellaneous verses in which the mixture is the same as before. Mrs. Katharine Tynan mixes too much sugar with her Irish rhythms and her charming tricks of the brogue. Mr. Strong's is a more tonic brew, which includes dramatic lyrics, epigrams, epitaphs, and a talk in a pub most faithfully reported. "Two Generations" gives his quality:—

"I turned and gave my strength to woman,  
 Leaving untilled the stubborn field.  
 Sinew and soul are gone to win her,  
 Slow, and most perilous her yield.

"The son I got stood up beside me  
 With fire and quiet beauty filled.  
 He looked upon me, then he looked  
 Upon the field I had not tilled.

"He kissed me and went forth to labour.  
 Where lonely tilth and moorland meet,  
 A gull above the ploughshare hears  
 The ironic song of our defeat."

That, if you will, is a "Time's Laughing Stock." But Mr. Strong has something to say, and a voice to say it with.

Finally, Mr. de la Mare. I confess that I seized his book first of all this batch, and an hour later, suffering from a surfeit of giggles, I vowed to write of him last, lest I should



cover this page with quotations. Mr. de la Mare elects to write stuff and nonsense, but those who have suffered his enchantment will be content, knowing that he can never, like Edward Lear (who naturally comes up for comparison) write pure nonsense. In fact he betrays himself by a subtitle—"And So On"—which might be translated "and the spells I put on simple English words." Here is stuff and nonsense:—

"There was an old man said 'I fear  
That life, my dear friends, is a bubble.  
Still, with all due respect to a Philistine ear,  
A limerick's best when it's double.'  
When they said 'But the waste  
Of time, temper, taste!'  
He gulped down his ink with cantankerous haste  
And chopped off his head with a shubble";

and here a fragment of "And So On":—

"Her blood stood still from cheek to heel,  
When, softer than a sigh,  
Sang in her ear, forlorn and drear,  
'Tis I!"

All old ones who are still in the nursery will rejoice in this delicious book.

BARRINGTON GATES.

### HENRY BROUGHAM

**Lord Brougham and the Whig Party.** By ARTHUR ASPINALL, M.A., Ph.D. Manchester University Press. (Longmans. 18s.)

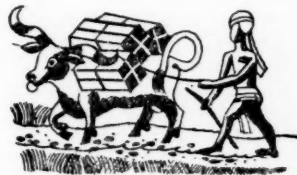
It is not surprising that there is no adequate biography of Henry Brougham. Mr. Aspinall's task has been to dispel lies about him, explore much new material, and faithfully record the facts about more than one side of his amazing career. For among the actors who have strutted upon the stage of English politics Henry Brougham has had no parallel. In serious parts he could do uncommonly well. He was the first English statesman to devote himself seriously to the problem of popular education, and Peacock's merry-jesting about the "Steam Intellect Society" touches him where he is least vulnerable. Bentham's letters scolding his erring pupil are still extant, but, in spite of his vagaries, Brougham was one of the few lawyers, let alone Lord Chancellors, who had ever been interested in reforming English law. He was a protagonist, too, in almost every movement of his period; he helped to found London University, to abolish the slave trade, and to reform the House of Commons. His championship of Queen Caroline was calculated to convulse England. As a Parliamentary orator his reputation was extraordinary, and, in spite of his almost incredible indiscretions and buffooneries, his energy and power were sufficient to make him feared for a generation both by his opponents and by his own party.

But what was his own party? Though he was never quite a Tory, he could be as conservative as the most old-fashioned Whig or the most doctrinaire economist. The starving labourers who revolted in 1830 found no more bitter persecutor. He long strove to become the leader of the Whigs, but at the critical moment he would be suddenly found in the camp of utilitarian radicalism or hobnobbing with Hunt and talking revolution. Francis Place was long his supporter, seeing in him the one man with the gifts necessary to bring some unity to the progressive forces of England and to stem the slow, weary tide of reaction. Brougham did not fail in this rôle for lack of trying, nor for lack of initiative. He was perhaps the first English politician to understand the political value of getting common opinion on his side; he advertised himself in the Press before Palmerston learnt the art, and he went "on the stump" before Gladstone was in politics. Poor Napier did as Brougham told him in the EDINBURGH in 1830, even adding a footnote at Brougham's dictation to the effect that "of all the portentous signs for the present Ministry the most appalling is the nearly unanimous choice of Mr. Brougham to be member for Yorkshire. *This is assuredly the most extraordinary event in the history of party politics.*" That such a remark might have a double edge does not seem to have occurred to Napier, Brougham, or his biographers,

though Macaulay, bitterly complaining that the EDINBURGH was in Brougham's pocket, may have found some consolation in its unconscious humour.

Brougham's failure to become leader of a progressive party at the time when England had most need of one was due to a total lack both of political judgment and of honesty. Perhaps either would have served. Belonging exclusively to the party of Henry Brougham, he became its only occupant. "Had he been as astute as he was unscrupulous" his self-seeking might have prospered. Had he been loyal to any group his gifts would have quickly made him its leader. Reliability is one of the most valuable of political assets, and Machiavelli was careful to recommend at least the appearance of sincerity. But it soon became impossible to believe or trust Brougham at all, and the only thing to do was to laugh at him.

A failure as a serious actor, Mr. Aspinall shows that Brougham was an unqualified success as a buffoon. Except in the works of W. S. Gilbert, there never was so outrageous a Lord Chancellor, so conceited a boor, so comic a politician. The TIMES did not like it when he applied to become a citizen of France and wanted to be elected as a deputy to the National Assembly in 1848. To desire to be a Frenchman was, as Lord Althorp remarked, "neither sane nor respectable," and PUNCH never forgot it. His visit to Scotland in 1834 was even less easy to live down. While Lord Chancellor in a Whig Government he toured that country, sometimes a Radical denouncing corruption and extolling progress and reform; sometimes a Whig, when his colleagues were actually present, spoiling orthodox politics by getting drunk and finally sitting up all night and getting "carried to the race-course next morning in a sedan chair, dressed in his wig and gown." The culminating feature, Mr. Aspinall tells us, of that "vagrant and grotesque apocalypse" (Disraeli's phrase) was a speech at Inverness, where, after receiving the freedom of the borough, he remarked upon his "pure and unmixed satisfaction" at finding that King William IV. lived in the hearts of his



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subjects in the ancient capital of the Highlands, and expressed his confidence that the King himself would share that satisfaction when he acquainted him "by that night's post of the gratifying circumstance."

The only worthy comment upon this escapade was a poem in the *EXAMINER*, which Mr. Aspinall does well to quote in full. The King never forgave Brougham—"He could not stand it," as Lord Melbourne remarked. Nor, indeed, could anyone. He lost the respect of all groups alike: even his friends ceased to be frightened when he spoke on their side; his indiscretions multiplied, and he finally drifted from the stage where he had played so many parts. If justice were done him he would have been remembered as a law reformer, an orator, and a pioneer of education. As it is, few people even know that he started the fashion of spending the winter in the Riviera, and that he has retained a regular status in English life to this day, with his nose prominent upon the weekly cover of *PUNCH*.

KINGSLEY MARTIN.

### EAST AFRICA

**East Africa: A New Dominion.** By ARCHIBALD CHURCH. (Wetherby. 18s.)

MAJOR CHURCH was the Labour representative on the East African Commission presided over by Mr. Ormsby-Gore, Mr. P. C. Linfield being the Liberal member. He gleaned much information, which he has embodied in a useful volume covering all the main questions of interest to students of East Africa—native policy, economic development, research, white settlement, and the problem of forms of government now brought into the forefront of politics by the recent White Paper. Major Church is strongly sympathetic towards the claims made on behalf of the native population, and his criticisms of the attitude of the white settlers, particularly in Kenya, are severe and even stinging. He does not think the African is by any means a lazy fellow, and he is so much impressed by the high standard of native cultivation, that he thinks our agricultural officers in East Africa should make a careful study of native methods before they "arrogantly assume that the methods of the European are far superior to those of the African."

He does not seem, however, to have grasped all the implications of his generally "pro-native" attitude. Space admits of one example only. He is evidently captivated by the idea, now being pushed so energetically by the Kenya settlers, led by Lord Delamere and Lord Francis Scott, of a "federation" of Kenya, Uganda, Tanganyika, Nyasaland, and Northern Rhodesia. His sub-title, "A New Dominion," places this idea in the foreground, and the phrase inevitably suggests a "self-governing" white community. Now what all this amounts to in fact is the domination of Kenya, and the Kenya native policy, over the whole of the vast area named. It means pressure of every kind to "encourage" the native to work on the white settlers' estates. It means a new South Africa—with a still smaller white minority controlling the life, the land rights, and the labour conditions of many millions of natives.

Major Church contends that Tanganyika will be able "to impose its enlightened policy upon the several constituent parts of East Africa." But there is not the slightest evidence that this would be so; and we may be quite sure that, if it were so, Lord Delamere's enthusiasm for federation would rapidly disappear. Nor does Major Church face the fundamental difficulty that Tanganyika is not part of the British Empire at all, but a territory held by mandate under the League of Nations. He claims that the Mandates Commission would wield a beneficent influence; but at the same time he speaks, without any critical comment, of "the cession of Tanganyika to Great Britain," and of "the virtual annexation by Great Britain of Tanganyika territory." He does not deal adequately with the objections of India to any such "federation" as that proposed; nor, finally, does he remember that the Commission, of which he himself was a member, reported unanimously that the day for such a development was still far off.

C. R. B.

### A TRIBUTE TO PROFESSOR CANNAN

**London Essays in Economics: in Honour of Edwin Cannan.** Edited by PROFESSOR T. E. GREGORY and DR. HUGH DALTON, M.P., with a Foreword by SIR WILLIAM BEVERIDGE, K.C.B. (Routledge. 10s. 6d.)

A COPY of Dr. Cannan's "Wealth" lies buried beneath the foundation-stone of the new buildings of the London School of Economics. From that test—ordeal by cenotaph, we may call it—his reputation as teacher and thinker will, we believe, emerge unscathed. A more severe trial is now imposed. A nosegay of selected—and well selected—blossoms, culled from the fields that he has himself

"ploughed and hoed and weeded,"

is offered to the doctor. A comparison of their qualities with the pretensions that their presentation implies does credit to all concerned. For twenty-nine years Dr. Cannan has tended his fields with a care, a skill, and a single-mindedness that cannot be overpraised. Much of his seed—what teacher can say more?—has fallen upon fruitful ground.

Professor Gregory and Dr. Dalton, who edit the volume, have written essays dealing specifically with the part that Dr. Cannan has played in shaping contemporary thought. Dr. Dalton writes on his general contribution; Professor Gregory on the work he has done in connection with monetary theory. Dr. Dalton's appreciation will itself be appreciatively read by hundreds of the master's old pupils. He points out that if Dr. Cannan has not "founded a school," in the sense in which Marshall may be said to have done so, he has, like Sidgwick, given those who live in schools and other sheltered places new windows through which to peer at their universe. For philosophers so minded, and so equipped, there will always be important work to do. Economic thought is peculiarly prone to deterioration through in-breeding. Analyses designed originally for the elucidation of contemporary problems will speedily degenerate into rigid and sterile intellectual exercises akin to those of the Schoolmen. "There was an unhealthy tendency developing in British economics," says Dr. Dalton, "to take existing institutions uncritically for granted, often not even to mention their existence, and to concentrate on building up a non-institutional apparatus of marginal utilities, scarcities and costs of production, consumers' and producers' surpluses and long and short periods, an apparatus of ever-increasing intellectual refinement but ever-diminishing practical appeal. Professor Cannan has done as much as any man to reverse this drift. . . ." This is well put. In all parts of the field of economic theory, but particularly in that ill-tended, weed-choked portion that is known as distribution, Dr. Cannan has sought continually to hold the tendency to in-breeding in check. In effect, he is for ever saying to the student—and it is something he can hardly say too often: "Stop! what are you supposed to be investigating? What relevance has your analysis to the world you live in and to the fellow-specimens who inhabit it?"

Dr. Gregory's essay on "Professor Cannan and contemporary Monetary Theory" contains in itself a germ of a fairly complete course of lectures. This is not the place in which to examine Dr. Cannan's views critically, nor yet the interpretation which Dr. Gregory puts upon them. Enough that the field is one in which Dr. Cannan's gift of pungent criticism, and his delight in tracking and exposing shams, have found ample scope for their exercise. The events of the war and of the post-war period laid bare the barrenness of British monetary theory: even its capacity for in-breeding seems to have atrophied. It had become, as Mr. Keynes has said, a "matter of oral tradition," which means that where there lingered no divine spark in the breast of the priest it had degenerated into the merest mumbo-jumbo. From this deplorable plight the post-war activities of Dr. Cannan, as of others with whom he was sometimes engaged in controversy, did much to rescue it.

There are nine other essays in the volume. "The problems of money and of population hold pride of place," says Sir William Beveridge in his illuminating foreword, "among the practical controversies which have interested Dr. Cannan." The majority of the essays deal with one or



other of these problems, and all of them are serious contributions to economic thinking. Taking them as a whole, they are not unworthy of the man they are designed to honour—they bear something of the impress of what Sir William Beveridge well calls his "lively and gentle and penetrating spirit."

### NEW NOVELS

- Giants in the Earth.** By O. E. ROLVAAG. (Benn. 8s. 6d.)  
**The Spanish Lady.** By MARGARET L. WOODS. (Cape. 7s. 6d.)  
**Due Reckoning.** By STEPHEN MCKENNA. (Butterworth. 7s. 6d.)  
**The Barbary Witch.** By ANTHONY RICHARDSON. (Constable. 7s. 6d.)  
**Cressage.** By A. C. BENSON. (Heinemann. 7s. 6d.)  
**Lover's Staff.** By SIBELL VANSITTART. (Allen & Unwin. 7s. 6d.)  
**New York is not America.** By FORD M. FORD. (Duckworth. 8s. 6d.)  
**Dark Ann.** By MARJORIE BOWEN. (The Bodley Head. 7s. 6d.)  
**"Thou Shalt Not Kill."** By MRS. BELLOC LOWNDES. (Hutchinson. 7s. 6d.)

THE problem of what we may call the bi-lingual author is always a fascinating one. Mr. George Moore in a lesser degree, Joseph Conrad in a greater, are perhaps the most striking modern examples of this. The literary records and files may offer up others. American literature, probably already full of them, adds a hitherto not well-known name. For O. E. Rolvaag, however, something a little different may be claimed. As the preface to his book says, "In Rolvaag we have a European author of our own—one who writes in America, about America, whose only aim is to tell us of the contributions of his people to American life; and who yet must be translated for us out of a foreign tongue." This is strange but true, and his combination of Norwegian tradition and American experience has given Rolvaag the power to create an amazingly simple yet forceful and dignified piece of work. Its simplicity is not a structural one, its power is not the power of restraint, its dignity is far from existing in its style. Per Hansa, its principal character, is an uncouth pioneer, full of American energy for conquering the eternally relentless, hostile, and terrible spirit of the Dakota prairie. His wife, a sensitive, delicate creature, is the complement to one of those inexplicable and tragic unions of which examples are infinite. This incompatibility, and yet the peculiar devotion of one to another, is a moving thing; it pervades the whole work; it gives it that simplicity and dignity which triumphantly surmount its length, some redundancy in the early parts, and the rather crude, unrestrained expression of the whole.

It is not an easy jump from this atmosphere of primitive struggle to "The Spanish Lady." We do not know if the authoress is to be called primarily a novelist who writes poetry or a poetess who dabbles in novels. Certainly she has given the air of romantic poetry to this historical novel whose scenes she has laid in the Cadiz of 1813 and onwards. At Cadiz it was found that Wellington had found a mistress incomparable—his Cleopatra. The story tells of a conspiracy which made use of her fascination to bring about his downfall. It is a well-written, picturesque piece of work, which should be taken up before any, except one, of the books following.

From one kind of intrigue to another. "Due Reckoning" is the final part of the trilogy Mr. McKenna calls "The Realists," and of which the first two parts were "Saviours of Society" and "The Secretary of State." Mr. McKenna is still occupied with the theme of political romance, political rise and fall, political intrigue—and the affairs of Lord Sheridan. There is not in "Due Reckoning" much alteration in the recipe which made his earlier political novels. But the worst parts of such a book as "Sonia" at least find no parallel here, and of modern writers in this particular class Mr. McKenna probably remains still the shrewdest and best.

When the publisher's wrapper states that the story within "is a powerful study of selfish and sinister domination . . ." there arises at once, without malice, a recollection of "Wuthering Heights." But there is no Heathcliff here in Mr. Richardson's "The Barbary Witch," and to attempt further comparison is futile. Mr. Richardson writes of a mother's dominion over her grown daughter. The style and

the imagination he expends on this theme are never more than average, never rise even as high as the theme itself. The sudden recollection of "Wuthering Heights" was an unfortunate one.

What applies to Mr. Richardson regarding mediocrity of style and treatment is also unfortunately true of the late A. C. Benson's "Cressage," a novel found among his papers after his death. Dignity and grace of style, gravity of thought, such as the publishers claim for it, we cannot find. There are occasions when it seems truly desirable, out of respect for an artist who cannot be present to exercise his own judgment, that posthumous publication should be prohibited by law. "Cressage" is an unworthy book to have to add to the name of a prose-writer of considerable distinction.

Miss Vansittart never descends to the level of those ladies whose books follow hers on this list. She is genuine if occasionally obscure and clumsy. Even after disconcerting, by the introduction of no fewer than six characters in her first paragraph, she manages to make a very readable story based on the reaction of the hatred of two old men (who in youth loved the same woman) on the lives of their descendants. She has not squeezed the last drop out of her theme, but there is a feud of an engaging kind, there is writing of simplicity and occasional beauty, if not passion, and, as with so many ladies, a happy ending.

"New York is not America" is the only book not truly to be called a novel on this list. But, excepting always "Giants in the Earth" and "The Spanish Lady," it is the most entertaining, possibly the most thoughtful, book here. Mr. Ford is always a writer of distinction and charm—distinctive because observant, charming because witty, fresh and sometimes naïve. He may not be aware of this naïveté—he may intend it with true literary cunning (when at once he ceases to be naïve, but no less charming), or it may be that he still retains some of his early fear of America. He may still exist in a state of wonder—a pygmy glancing at a Babylon. Whatever it is, there is a quick, joyous, anecdotal air about all he says, a shrewd observance, a calculation, a fine wit.

Miss Marjorie Bowen and Mrs. Belloc Lowndes have each added another characteristic production to their heavenward pile. Readers who read them and readers who don't will understand.

### THREE BOOKS ABOUT CHINA

- The Long Old Road in China.** By LANGDON WARNER. (Aitow-smith. 16s.)  
**China, the Facts.** By LIEUTENANT-COLONEL P. T. ETHERTON. (Benn. 12s. 6d.)  
**China in Sign and Symbol.** By LOUISE CRANE. With decorations by KENT CRANE. (Batsford. £2 10s.)

THE spate of books about China continues unabated, and here are three to suit all tastes, a travel book to slake the thirst of those who are doomed to travel only in the spirit, a well-informed exposition of the present situation for those whose interests are political and economic, and a delightful bundle of strange lore about Peking shop-signs and other kindred matters for those who like to rub shoulders with common humanity.

Travel books are of two sorts, those in which one is interested in the personality of the traveller, and those in which one is interested in the places to which he went; rare, indeed, are those which combine both qualities, and they are the great travel books of the world. Mr. Langdon Warner's book is of the second kind, and his journey is one to make any traveller's mouth water. For, starting from Peking in 1924, he made his way by Sianfu, Lanchow, Kanchow, and Suchow along that immemorial caravan route by which Buddhism came to China, and long caravans of silk every year made their way to the West, one of the oldest and one of the most romantic trade routes in the world. It is the road trodden (for part of the way) by Marco Polo, and Mr. Warner turned aside to visit the ruins of "Edzina," the city where his great forerunner halted (coming in the opposite direction) before crossing the great desert. The goal of his journey was Tun Huang, and his object was to study the frescoes and carvings in the Caves

of the Thousand Buddhas there and any other objects of archaeological interest *en route*, on behalf of the Fogg Museum at Harvard. He was able to fix the site of two hitherto unknown stages on the caravan route, and to take back to Harvard a series of frescoes, an eighth-century statue, and many rubbings of inscriptions.

This book, however, is not concerned with the scientific results of the expedition, but with the journey itself, its excitements, discomforts, and dangers, which Mr. Warner vividly describes, with the aid of a number of excellent photographs: his account of winter in the desert and of the filthy Chinese inns with their often surly innkeepers cannot be read without a shiver; but he manages to preserve the sense of high adventure which took him through it all with undaunted spirits. But though his enthusiasm impels sympathy, the reader is left with a rather uncomfortable sensation, aroused by his account (in the Preface) of what happened when he and his companion, Mr. Jayne, went back on a second expedition in 1925:—

"This time we had five other Americans in the party and were prepared to devote eight or ten months and our five thousand negatives to the exclusive study and recording of the wall paintings at Tun Huang. But we had reckoned without that fateful May 30th. News of the Shanghai shooting on that day travelled like wild-fire through the interior. Foreigners suddenly became unwelcome, if not actually in danger, throughout the country. The party was met at Tun Huang by a menacing mob of oasis farmers, the very ones who had been so friendly on our last visit. We were forced immediately to withdraw—it was that or a fight for a cause in which we had obviously no rights. I doubt now whether Westerners will be able to carry on investigations at that spot for many years to come."

But from Mr. Warner's own account it appears evident that what caused his ill reception on his second visit was the fact that he had bodily removed a number of frescoes from the walls of the caves ("without touching the sixth-century work, of which no other example is known to exist, and avoiding the greatest masterpieces of the Tang period"—too kind!), and also the little Buddhist statue now at Harvard ("I was enabled to set about a labour of love and reverently to pry from its pedestal a figure halting upon one knee, and with sensitive hands clasped in adoration before its bosom"). He had also, unfortunately, got into trouble with the town of Chinta, by taking away from the altar of the Golden Pagoda there a tiny bronze Buddhist figure, which was "pressed upon" him by the magistrate's brother as a gift. What authority the magistrate's brother had to give it away does not appear clear. The plain fact is that whereas the earlier European explorers in Chinese territory were able to take away specimens, unhindered and unresented by either Government or people, the situation has now entirely changed, since both are fully aware of the pecuniary or historical value (as the case may be) of China's archaeological treasures. The difficulty recently experienced by Sven Hedin in obtaining permission to lead his expedition into Inner Mongolia and Western Turkestan makes this clear; and it is quite obvious that it was not the Shanghai shootings, but the knowledge of what Mr. Warner had removed on his first expedition and the fear of what he was going to remove on his second, which led to the hostility of the oasis farmers. What should we say if a Chinese archaeologist arrived at Pickering and proceeded to remove the frescoes from the walls of the church, pressing a few shillings into the vergers' hand? At all events, three women missionaries visited Tun Huang shortly after his precipitate flight, were welcomed by the people, and spent as long as they liked in the caves; but they did not attempt to do any reverent prising from pedestals.

Colonel Etherton's book (which is also well illustrated with photographs) gives one view of "the facts" of the Chinese situation, as to which he is better qualified to speak than many who have written of them. It is essentially a piece of book-making *ad hoc*, compiled partly from Blue Books and history books, partly from newspapers, and partly from personal knowledge, and it inevitably lacks the interest of Colonel Etherton's earlier works on Central Asia, and suffers from a certain scrappiness. But it is a useful introduction to the Chinese situation, explaining the historical evolution of China's relations with foreign Powers, especially in relation to loans and railways, the significance of extra-territoriality, the Maritime Customs and *likin*, and the

rise of the rival parties of North and South. One chapter is devoted to a careful elucidation of the present crisis (as it was in the late spring), and another discusses the future of China. Colonel Etherton is inclined to prophesy that the result of the civil war will be a stalemate, "with China divided into two separate republics—a 'South' with influence extending to Hankow and Shanghai, with the Yangtze River as its northern boundary, and a Northern republic with its capital at Peking and its chief trading ports at Tientsin and Weihaiwei."

There is an astonishing mistake in the map with which the book is provided, a railway being represented as connecting Kalgan and Verkhne Udinsk across Mongolia via Urga: no such line at present exists.

Mrs. Crane's "panorama of Chinese life, past and present," as seen in the signs and symbols which may be met with in the streets of Peking, is a delightful book. Does anyone wish to distinguish between the "South Chinese wine" shop and the shop which sells congratulatory cakes? The place where you buy hats for Number One Mandarins and that which deals in kingfisher feather ornaments, or hot noodles, or false hair? Would you tell the saddle-maker, the bamboo sieve-maker, the dealer in candlewicks by his sign? Mrs. Crane's text and Mr. Crane's decorations will enable you to do it at a glance. Or have you been fortunate enough, stopping your ricksha in a crowded Peking street, to see a rich man's funeral go by, scarlet coffin and mourners in white, beggars bearing standards, musicians, paper-money scatterers, and bearers of paper images of food and chairs and carriages and boats and secretaries and concubines, which the dead man will need in the other world? Mrs. Crane will explain the meaning of it all. There could be no better companion in Peking streets, or on a grey afternoon in London, when (if wishes were rickshas) you would fain be there.

## REVIEWS AND MAGAZINES

HOUSE OF LORDS Reform is the principal item in this month's catalogue of Home Affairs. Lord Beauchamp has an article on the subject in the "Contemporary Review," and Sir John Marriott deals with it in the "Fortnightly"; in the "Nineteenth Century" Lord Sydenham writes on "The Peers and the Nation," and Lord Hunsdon and Professor J. H. Morgan each contribute a paper on "The House of Lords and the Parliament Act" to the "English Review." Other articles on Home Affairs are: "The Liberal Revival," by Sir Charles Hobhouse ("The Contemporary Review"), "The Farmer's Sheet-Anchor," by Professor T. B. Wood ("Nineteenth Century"), and "Strikes and the State," by Lieut.-Commander Kenworthy (the "Fortnightly").

Lord Olivier, writing in the "Contemporary Review" on "The Indian Political Atmosphere," complains of "... the consistently partial and in effect misleading character of the information habitually purveyed to the British public with regard to Indian politics. . . . There is resolute obscurantism with regard to the results of experience in the working of the Provincial Councils created under the Montagu-Chelmsford Dyarchy Scheme." Lord Olivier gives in some detail Indian opinion on the subject and describes the situation at the present moment. The "Dalhousie Review," a Canadian Quarterly has an article on "Nationalism and Unity in Canada," by J. L. McDougall. There is an article on "Ireland: Retrospect and Prospect," by R. M. Fox in the "Nineteenth Century." Alice Fox Parry writes on "Labour Legislation in Australia," in the "Empire Review."

Turning from Colonial to Foreign Affairs we have a wide choice. China has become a standing dish—"China as a Market," by E. M. Gull ("Nineteenth Century"), "Affairs in China," by W. F. Tyler ("Fortnightly"), "China," by J. O. P. Bland ("Edinburgh Review"), and "An Indictment of Christian Missions (A Reply)," by Dr. Ting-fang Lew ("English Review"). Dr. R. W. Seton-Watson discusses "The Situation in Roumania" in the "Contemporary Review." Mr. Charles Woods writes on "Albania" in the "Fortnightly," and on "Italy, Yugoslavia, and the Adriatic" in the "Contemporary Review." Mr. Dudley Heathcote writes on "Hungary and the Peace Treaties" in the "Fortnightly." The "Nineteenth Century" prints an article by Ford Madox Ford, which he

"has called 'Pax' after the breathless ejaculation that, as schoolboys we used to let out when we were too hard pressed



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in any running game. Let us have a cessation, let each of us do what he can to bring about a cessation of this cruel and ignorant schoolboy's sport of crying 'Yah' and sticking out our tongues at each other over the fence. . . . For myself I grow nearly frenzied when I hear a semi-imbecile Briton sneer at the United States, or a cheaply epigrammatic American condemn my own country, or a Frenchman too skilful of tongue pour vitriol over both."

The "American Review of Reviews" is largely devoted to photographs and cartoons of Lindbergh, and there is an article on "Lindbergh in France," by M. Jusserand. The "Green Leaf" (La Revue Verte), in which every article appears both in English and French, has "La Colonization Intérieure de la France," by M. Paul Rives, and "The I.L.P. and the Labour Party," by A. Fenner Brockway. The English translations are adequate, but sometimes hardly idiomatic.

The present number of the "Calendar" is to be the last; a note on the last page, headed "A Valediction Forbidding Mourning" and beginning "The cessation of a literary review is not an event to ruffle the surface of national life. . . ." gives reasons for the funeral which might possibly have been put more simply. This number contains verse by W. J. Turner and Roy Campbell, criticism by D. H. Lawrence and Edwin Muir, and fiction by Rudolf Kassar and William Plomer.

The "Monthly Criterion" has "Art Questions of the Day," by Wilhelm Worringer, a short story by Liam O'Flaherty, and the conclusion of "Chaucer and the Great Italian Writers of the Trecento," by Mario Praz. T. S. Eliot reviews Bertrand Russell's latest work under the heading "Why Mr. Russell is a Christian."

The "Dial" prints a fine reproduction of a painting by Van Gogh. There is a story by D. H. Lawrence and a German letter from Thomas Mann.

## ON THE EDITOR'S TABLE

ANY good guide to book-buying is to be welcomed, and Messrs. W. H. Smith & Son have, with characteristic thoroughness, produced one called "The Book Window," which, covering a large range of publishers, is exceptionally valuable. It is enlivened by an amusing interview with Mr. H. G. Wells and a Rapid Survey of English Literature by Mr. S. P. B. Mais, whose rapidity is the astonishment of his contemporaries.

A book for yachtsmen is "Amateurs Afloat," by H. Ian Maciver (Hopkinson, 12s. 6d.), which deals with the author's experiences cruising and racing under sail and in motor-boats.

New volumes in the International Library of Psychology are: "Sex and Repression in Savage Society," by B. Malinowsky (Kegan Paul, 10s. 6d.); "The Psychology of Character," by A. A. Roback (21s.); "The Social Basis of Consciousness," by Trigant Burrow (12s. 6d.).

## NEW GRAMOPHONE RECORDS

### COLUMBIA RECORDS

Two interesting 3s. records are in the "Training for Speaking" series: Olivia and Viola in the garden scene from "Twelfth Night," by Miss Winifred Cain and Miss Bronwen Rees, and Rosalind's speech from Act III., Scene V., of "As You Like It," by Miss Margaret Littlefair (4396), and "The Hindu's Paradise," by Miss Margaret Littlefair, and "The Student's Dilemma," by Professor Paul Berton (4394).

### BELTONA RECORDS

THE Beltona have two 3s. 10-in. records this month: "Wae's me for Prince Charlie" and "The Auld Hoose," sung by Jean Houston, soprano, and "Come under my plaidie" and "My ain folk," sung by John Mathewson, baritone (6076 and 6079). The 2s. 6d. records include: "Peace, Perfect Peace," "All Hail the Power," "All People that on Earth," and "Onward, Christian Soldiers," played by the Beltona Military Band (1243); "At the Mid Hour of Night" and "Jesu Doloris Victima," sung by Agnes O'Kelly, contralto (1195); "Danny Deever" and "Chorus, Gentlemen," sung by Reginald Johnson, baritone (1231); "It is a charming girl I love" and "Love smiles but to deceive," sung by Gladys Parker, contralto (1232); "Quand Madelon" and "Entry of the Gladiators," played by the Beltona Military Band (1242).

## INSURANCE NOTES.

### INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF ACTUARIES

IT will be disappointing if the Life Assurance Offices in this country do not turn to good account the publicity which their business has received as a result of the recent International Congress of Actuaries.

The President of the Congress, Sir Joseph Burn, made a striking statement in his address at the opening session. He said that over the thirty years from 1894 to 1924 the total ordinary sums assured in the British Isles increased from £526,000,000 to £1,209,000,000, i.e., approximately 130 per cent., while the corresponding figures for the United States of America showed an increase of about 800 per cent. Sir Joseph added, "Even when allowance was made for the more rapid growth in the population of the United States over the period under consideration, the difference remained very marked, as would be evident from the fact that, whereas in 1894 the amount of life assurance per head was approximately the same in both countries, in 1924 the average per head in the United States appeared to be about three times the figure for the British Isles."

At least two conclusions may be drawn from these remarkable figures: (1) That the Life Offices in the United States are very successful in their efforts to interest the public in their wares, and (2) that the American citizen takes his obligations to his wife and family far more seriously than does the married man on this side.

While the British offices may be left to consider how best they may increase the effectiveness of their new business machinery, it is perhaps permissible to urge business and professional men to note the figures quoted by Sir Joseph, and to consider very carefully whether the needs of their families are adequately met by existing life policies.

### "THE FAMILY CHARTER."

One of the great mutual offices has recently published a leaflet entitled "The Family Charter" policy. The scheme is described as "a new method of life assurance by which a married man of limited means can make as complete provision for the needs of his family as is humanly possible." In return for a uniform annual premium payable for a fixed number of years this "comprehensive contract for family protection" guarantees a substantial capital sum to the widow, five annual payments for educational purposes, and if the father dies while the children are very young an annuity to assist the widow in maintaining the children until the school payments fall due.

It is refreshing to find the Scottish Widows' Fund and Life Assurance Society showing so much enterprise. As the scheme is being supported by some admirable advertisements, it should result in a large expansion of new business. If an office of this character will only carry out a persistent campaign for new business, it will bring about a desirable improvement in its own position, and, in addition, it will make an effective contribution to the effort to increase the total amount of life assurance in force—an example which would surely stimulate other offices.

### POLICIES BY EASY PAYMENTS.

At the present time there are but a few life offices prepared to issue monthly premium policies, and it may be that one means of increasing the volume of life business will be to make it easier for the buyer to pay for it. The Legal and General Life Assurance Society is the latest recruit to the ranks of the monthly premium offices, and has published a prospectus entitled "£1 per month." Once having decided how many pounds per month are to be devoted to a policy, it is a simple matter to calculate from the tables given how much sum assured any particular premium will buy. The usual medical examination is excused if the age is less than fifty years and the policy does not exceed £2,500. It is stated that a simple plan has been devised to cope with the old difficulty of making remittances at frequent intervals.

The "Legal and General" is a pioneer of the movement which has for its object the improvement of the health of life policy-holders. Free medical examinations are offered to those who wish to be periodically overhauled—a most commendable practice, and one which is even more important than a regular visit to the dentist. As part of its health campaign this office has issued an amusing booklet under the title "Perfect and Just Weight."

These notes are written by a recognized Insurance Consultant, and are intended to give helpful advice to THE NATION readers on Insurance matters. Queries are welcomed and answered, without charge, in strict confidence. Address your Insurance queries to the Insurance Editor, THE NATION AND ATHENÆUM, 38, Great James Street, London, W.C.1.



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## NOTICE TO READERS

WILL readers kindly note that our Insurance Notes re-appear this week in a new form.

In the past, general information about the various forms of life assurance has been given. From this week onwards, news will be given of new developments in assurance; new policies, new scales of premiums, and insurance publications that are likely to be of value to readers.

As in the past, readers are entitled to the free advice of our contributor on all insurance matters. Many of our readers have availed themselves of this service in the past year, and have expressed their thanks for the advice and assistance given.

It cannot be too strongly emphasized that all inquiries received are treated as strictly confidential. Our contributor is not informed of the name and address of the inquirer, and each inquiry receives his attention on its merits.

The Insurance Notes appear in THE NATION the first week in each month. Follow them carefully, and if you are requiring assistance on any matter relating to Insurance, address your inquiry to the Insurance Editor.

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### Editorial.

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## FINANCIAL SECTION

## THE WEEK IN THE CITY

## NEW YORK RECOVERY—HOME RAILWAY PROSPECTS—WHITE STAR LINE.

**W**HILE the London Stock Exchange is still depressed under the weight of new issues, the New York stock market is again soaring with the help of easy money and some excited dealings in U.S. Steel Common Stock. Mr. Pierre Dupont, chairman of General Motors, has purchased 114,000 shares of U.S. Steel, involving an outlay of some \$14,000,000, with the object, it is said, of bringing General Motors and U.S. Steel into close affiliation. The half-yearly statements of both these groups show increases in earnings. A more hopeful feeling about American trade is noticeable. The easing of money rates is probably due to the slackening of new issues on the New York market. The over-loaded dealers and underwriting syndicates are working off their commitments by offering stock at "bargain" prices. For example, one syndicate which bought New York City 4 per cent. stock at 101.346 and sold it to the public to yield 3.9 per cent., is now offering it at par. In other words, the mistake of offering bonds at too high prices is being remedied in the most sensible manner. Apart from the rises in U.S. Steel and General Motors, Kennecott Copper (a former recommendation of this page) has advanced to 66½ this week. Only oil stocks generally remain depressed.

The interim dividends declared by the "big four" in the home railway market fully satisfied general expectations in the City. In the case of G.W.R., the actual (2½ per cent.) exceeded the estimate (2 per cent.). The L. & N.E. passed the interim dividend on its 4 per cent. second preference stock, but the directors expect to be able to pay the full 4 per cent. at the end of the year. The L. & N.E. preferred ordinary stock again received no interim dividend, but there is some hope of the ½ per cent. paid last year being increased. The 1927 interim dividends compared with those of 1925 and 1926 are shown in the following table:—

		DIVIDENDS PER CENT.							
		L.M. & S.		L. & N.E. (Pref.)		G.W.R.		Southern (Def.)	
		Int.	Final.	Int.	Final.	Int.	Final.	Int.	Final.
1925	...	2½	3½	2½	2½	2½	44	—	3½
1926	...	1½	1½	—	½	1½	1½	—	1½
1927	...	2	—	—	—	2½	—	—	—

The Railway Rates Tribunal has fixed January 1st, 1928, as the "appointed day" when the "standard" charges come into force. The "standard" charges which it has sanctioned are in effect the present scale of charges (60 per cent. above the pre-war scale for goods and 50 per cent. for passengers), with modifications only in the "exceptional" rates, and with certain allowances on the traffics of the depressed industries. The "appointed day" was therefore, for all practical purposes, in April last when the goods' charges were raised to 60 per cent. above the pre-war scale. The net receipts for 1927 will not, however, compare with the "standard" revenues estimated to be raised from the "standard" charges. For the first half of the year traffic receipts were only slightly better than those of 1925. To-day the coal trade is depressed and the export and shipbuilding industries which have largely worked off the accumulation of orders from the coal strike, are not expanding as was hoped. It is not, therefore, to be expected that the railway traffic receipts (in spite of the increase in goods' charges) will show very substantial increase for the year over those of 1925. The L.M. & S. directors have pointed out that the economies which have been effected in working expenditure have been largely offset by the reduction of income from investments owing to the heavy draft made upon the reserves in the last two years. The next table shows what the ordinary stocks would earn on the basis of "standard" income and 1925 income:—

	EARNINGS ON ORDINARY STOCKS.			
	L.M. S.	L. & N.E. (Pref. Ord.)	G.W.	Southern (Deferred)
"Standard" income % on ord. stocks ...	7.8%	5%	8.2%	3.8%
1925 income ...	4.25%	Short by 2½%	4.875%	2½%

The final table shows the present prices of the ordinary stocks compared with the "low" prices of 1926 and the yields per cent. at present prices on the basis of 1925 dividends:—

	Prices.		Yield on 1925 divs.
	Lowest 1926.	Aug. 2nd.	
L.M. & S. ...	68 9-16	78	8.2%
L. & N.E. (Pref. Ord.) ...	48	32	11.9%
L. & N.E. (Deferred) ...	134	17	5.9%
G.W. ...	82½	92	7.6%
Southern (Deferred) ...	11½	38	9.2%

The yields on some of these railway stocks may look attractive on the basis of 1925 dividends, but it must be remembered that while L.M. & S. and G.W. may possibly earn their 1925 dividends, there is no chance of the L. & N.E. earning 5 per cent. (or paying even 2½ per cent.) on its preferred ordinary this year, and that the Southern traffic receipts for the first half of 1927 showed a slight decline from those of 1925. There is good ground for agreeing with the author of "Railways versus Roads," a pamphlet published last week, that the railways will never regain prosperity until they meet road competition by running road transport themselves. More business would come to the railways, as indeed to other domestic industries, if roads were allowed their proper development. Motor transport would then be accepted as a "feeder" of the railway line, and motor vehicles would be used by the railway companies in providing the public with a more efficient transport service. If this could be regarded as a reasonable prospect, home railway ordinary stocks would immediately become a good speculation; but the "if" implies a considerable political risk.

Underwriters were relieved of liabilities in the recent White Star Line issue of 6½ per cent. cumulative preference shares, but by a narrow margin. The prospectus of this shipping issue, like that of the Harland & Wolff preference issue, which was also sponsored by Lord Kylsant, was somewhat lacking in real information. The issue was made to complete the financing of the purchase of the White Star Line from the International Mercantile Marine Company of New Jersey through the Royal Mail Steam Packet Company. The purchase price was £7,000,000. The tonnage wholly owned (which includes the "Majestic," "Olympic," and "Homer") amounts to 305,789 tons. An additional 133,002 tons is the Company's proportion of vessels owned jointly with other companies. These figures imply a purchase price of nearly £16 a ton, excluding the tonnage in which the Company has an interest through shareholding in other shipping companies. The purchase price is high enough seeing that Lord Kylsant probably paid considerably more than the amount bid by Furness Withy. The average age of the White Star fleet is estimated at eighteen years, against ten years for the Cunard fleet. The 1926 report of the International Mercantile Marine again showed a loss, after allowing for depreciation, on the operation of its subsidiary lines, including the White Star, but the prospectus of the White Star issue stated that the dividends were amply secured. Capital and dividends are, in fact, guaranteed by the Royal Mail. The proceeds of the issue are to be used to pay two instalments of the purchase price, leaving a balance of about £2,500,000 not due till December 31st, 1936. The White Star capital consists of £5,000,000 in preference shares (of which 2,500,000 were issued on January last at 20s.), and £4,000,000 in ordinary shares, which have been "subscribed at par payable in cash." We believe that these ordinary shares are only two shillings paid.



